United Nations A/56/268

General Assembly

Distr.: General
31 July 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Item 124 of the provisional agenda*
Advancement of women

Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

Report of the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 54/135 of 17 December 1999, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant international organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and in consultation with Member States, to prepare a comprehensive report on the situation of rural women and challenges faced by them, based, inter alia, on the outcome of an expert group meeting, which would draw from the contributions and case studies provided by experts from various regions and to submit it to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

2. In pursuance of the request of the General Assembly, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and in consultation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), convened an expert group meeting on the situation of rural women in the context of globalization, which was hosted by the Government of Mongolia at Ulaanbaatar, from 4 to 8 June 2001. The experts examined the impact on rural women of major global economic trends, such as the growth in rural non-farm economic activities, the liberalization of trade and markets for agricultural products, the commercialization of agriculture, the rapid diffusion of products, technologies and information and changing consumption patterns. They proposed a research and policy agenda which would maximize the beneficial effects of globalization for women in the context of ongoing social and economic change in rural areas.

3. The recommendations of the expert group meeting were directed to Governments, the United Nations system, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society. The experts expanded the agenda of action to be taken at both the international and national levels, as outlined in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women[1] and in the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session (see resolution S-23/3, annex).

4. Issues relating to the situation of rural women were considered in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[2] throughout the Beijing Declaration[3] and Platform for Action, and in the above-mentioned outcome document on further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The emphasis was on the equal access of rural women to productive resources, such as land, capital, credit and technology, and to gainful employment, the decision-making process, education and health services. The Platform

* A/56/150.

** Submission of the present document was delayed owing to the need to obtain clearance.

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for Action also emphasized the need for the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes that enhance the situation of women producers in rural areas, increase their incomes and promote household food security.

5. The outcome document emphasized that there were still too many rural women working in the informal economy with low levels of income and little job and social security. These women also often had no rights to own land, even through right of inheritance. It further outlined microcredit and other financial instruments as successful strategies for the economic empowerment of women living in poverty, in particular in rural areas.

6. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (see General Assembly resolution 34/180) obliges State parties to take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles that rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and to ensure the application of the Convention to women in rural areas (art. 14).

7. In addition, in resolutions 2000/13 of 17 April 2000[4] and 2001/34 of 23 April 2001,[5] the Commission on Human Rights focused specifically on the right of women to equal ownership of, access to and control over land and their equal right to own property and to adequate housing. By these resolutions, the Commission reaffirmed prior commitments and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, resolutions 1997/19 of 27 August 1997, 1998/15 of 21 August 1998 and 1999/15 of 25 August 1999 of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights[6] and Commission on the Status of Women resolution 42/1 of 13 March 1998.[7]

8. The present report takes into account the findings and recommendations contained in all of the above-mentioned documents, as well as previous reports of the Secretary-General on the situation of rural women (A/40/239 and Add.1, A/44/516, A/48/187, A/50/257/Rev.1, A/52/326, and A/54/123). The report also examines the impact of global trends and their policy implications as regards the situation of rural women, and provides policy recommendations that are aimed at maximizing the beneficial effects of globalization for rural women while curtailing those effects that are harmful. The report is based on the analysis and conclusions of the above-mentioned expert group meeting case studies and contributions provided by experts from various regions and representatives of United Nations entities, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, FAO and the World Bank, as well as literature on the subject.

9. The conceptual framework for analysing the situation of rural women in the context of globalization is identified in section II below. In sections III and IV, the report focuses on the changes in livelihood patterns and the changing patterns of labour mobility, respectively. Section V contains an analysis of household dynamics in terms of the structure of households, household division of labour, gender relations and decision-making processes. Conclusions and recommendations are contained in section VI.

II. Conceptual framework for analysing the situation of rural women in the context of globalization

10. Globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon inclusive of trade liberalization, greater mobility of capital and increased financial flows, changes in labour demand, liberalization of labour markets and their growing flexibility,* changes in the process of production, changes in the role and function of the State, rapid diffusion of products and consumption patterns, more rapid diffusion of information and technology, new forms of governance and mechanisms of regulation, and the emergence of a global civil society.

11. Rural development, in the context of globalization, is affected by intensified commercialization and industrialization of agriculture, the growing economic and political influence of multinational corporations, the expansion of agribusiness and the emergence of global commodity chains. Increasing privatization of resources and services, liberalization of trade and markets for food and other agricultural products, intensification of international and internal labour movements and wider

* That is, a reduction in stable, permanent work and an increase in temporary and flexible work.

use of information and communication technologies are among the other factors that affect rural communities in the context of globalization.

12. The commercialization of agriculture has been one of the most significant factors in the transformation of the rural and agricultural sectors. With commercialization, the market plays an increasingly important role in establishing links to a wider economy, since most agricultural input (fertilizers, seeds, farming equipment) are purchased and most output (livestock, agricultural products) are sold. Thus, agricultural production shifts from subsistence to cash crop farming which is increasingly aimed at export markets. These changes are compounded by the liberalization of trade and the freer movement of capital.

13. Changes in the agricultural sector of developing countries have been accompanied by a wide variety of activities, ranging from the creation of rural industries to the establishment of export processing zones. In the process of rural industrialization, independent entrepreneurs cater for local and international markets and act as subcontractors to larger domestic and foreign firms, thus further intensifying market integration.

14. The ongoing changes have had a mixed impact on regions, countries, households and individuals. New opportunities presented by the process of globalization have benefited some and intensified the social exclusion and marginalization of others. The gender impact has been particularly apparent. It is important to understand that impact and how to maximize the benefits and minimize the adverse effects of change upon women.

15. The lack of comprehensive data and information constrains an analysis of the differentiated impact of the process of globalization on rural populations. The complex nature of the phenomenon of globalization adds to the difficulty.

16. Participants in the expert group meeting on the situation of rural women in the context of globalization agreed on the following principles in addressing the issue:

(a) Globalization is a process which impacts differently on women and men;

(b) The impact of globalization should be considered in terms of:

(i) Short and long-term gains and losses for women and men;

(ii) The increase in choices, opportunities and risks that women may encounter;

(iii) The effect of the increased participation of women in paid employment on the traditional and reproductive responsibilities of women, and on their empowerment;

(iv) Existing local contexts, gender relations, class and ethnic divisions and regional disparities.

17. They also identified two factors that determine how women are affected by change, namely, the role that women play in traditional and/or subsistence production and the extent to which they are able to take advantage of the new, diversifying activities.

18. They further took note of the existing conditions for women with regard to skills, access to resources, household structure, gender division of labour and their role in decision-making processes, and examined the effect of globalization on all of those factors. The present report provides an analysis of the interplay among these factors.

19. The present report also discusses the diversification of livelihoods, how livelihoods are changing in the wake of globalization, and the effects on the situation of women in terms of their access to resources, income-earning opportunities and working conditions. It also examines the changing patterns of labour mobility, analyses how such change affects the opportunities available to women, and focuses on changes in household structure, household division of labour, gender relations and decision-making processes.

III. Diversification of livelihoods

20. For the majority of rural households in developing countries, market integration has given way to adaptive patterns whereby households have diversified their sources of livelihood, either as a strategy for survival or for accumulation. Most rural households are not able to support themselves exclusively by land-based activities and therefore seek additional income from various sources. The strategy a household can adopt depends upon, among other factors, access to productive resources such as land, capital, education and skills. Households may allocate

their labour force between farm and non-farm sectors and between wage and non-wage labour.

21. Under market conditions, the main obstacle encountered by rural households is the availability of cash. Households that have diverse sources of livelihood and predictable and regular cash earnings are able to achieve the highest level of security. Farmers who are relatively better off are maximizing their cash earnings by venturing into non-farm activities, such as operating a small grocery store, restaurant or café in the village or nearly town centre, or taking up a regular job in the private or public sector. Supplementing land-based earnings with a stable and regular non-farm income enables such households to maximize their survival and creates the possibility of savings and, for some, the accumulation of capital. The availability of cash allows these households to hire wage labour, thus freeing the women and children from having to seek work outside the home. The most vulnerable households, at the lower end of the social strata, must rely exclusively on the labour of the entire family, that is, of men, women and children, for their survival.[8]

22. Household livelihoods and the situation of rural women in the context of globalization therefore vary in accordance with access to resources and employment opportunities.

A. Access to resources and benefits

23. Despite the trend towards the diversification of livelihoods, most households in rural areas still depend upon land and natural resources for their basic subsistence. Rights of control over land are important, since they determine access to other resources and benefits, such as extension services, credit and membership in farmers' organizations. In some countries, rural women continue to be deprived by law of equal rights to land. In other countries, although they may have de jure rights, they do not have de facto rights.

24. In some cases, customary rights to land and other natural resources have enabled women to engage in and benefit from agricultural and forest-based production. However, while the privatization process has accelerated the process of land titling, land consolidation and reorganization of the use of common property it has also, notwithstanding some exceptions, increasingly undermined property rights, thus depriving women of direct access to land. Privatization tends to concentrate in the hands of male household heads or the local elite property rights (such as access, use and control) which had previously been distributed within the household and the community.

25. Communal land and forests are decreasing in many countries owing to pressure from commercial logging, population growth and the expansion of commercial agriculture. The increased scarcity and degradation of land, water and common property resources are affecting the productivity and economic viability of women's work, both in farm and non-farm activities which are often the only source of income. It also adds to the domestic workload in terms of time and energy spent on collecting wood for fuel, water and other resources that are no longer easily available.

26. Rural women are closely associated with local ecological resources and manage biodiversity on a daily basis. A renewed commercial interest in biodiversity and indigenous plants and materials has created opportunities for rural women to utilize their traditional knowledge and experience and to take advantage of emerging national and global markets. Large-scale commercial enterprises have, however, a tendency to assume the commercial rights to biogenetic resources. Women may not be able to utilize potential opportunities unless the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights are implemented in a transparent and just manner so as to protect the rights of local communities to indigenous resources.

27. Another important issue is the possible effect of the increased privatization of agricultural extension services and financial markets on rural women. The access of rural women to agricultural support systems has traditionally been limited, not only because extension workers generally worked with male heads of household but also because time constraints and unequal distribution of domestic work prevent women from participating in such programmes. The privatization of agricultural extension services will further adversely affect the prospects of women's access to them.

28. Provision of microfinance is a popular measure to support the access of rural women to income-generating activities. The impact of microfinance initiatives for rural women is, in general, positive. With ongoing trade liberalization and financial market

integration, however, it is important not only to provide microfinance to rural women in a sustainable manner but also to provide appropriate training in managerial skills and financial and marketing operations. In addition, it should be recognized that microfinance should be seen only as an entry point for the economic advancement of rural women. The long-term focus should be on upgrading the income-generating activities of rural women in order to ensure their competitiveness under existing market conditions.

B. New employment opportunities and working conditions

29. Commercialization of agriculture, together with trade liberalization, especially in developing countries, has created new employment opportunities for women in rural areas, which are also accompanied by new risks. For instance, export crop expansion may force women from permanent agricultural employment into seasonal employment. In Thailand, for example, women have started to subcontract to multinational corporations on family-owned plots to produce baby corn and asparagus on former paddy land or have started to raise shrimps under contract to foreign companies. Often, such employment arrangements in the agricultural export sector entail low paying, labour-intensive, manual jobs. Despite low wages, however, the net returns from such activities may be an improvement over the traditional agricultural activities that they are replacing. Such is the case in Thailand, where women now earn more in a shorter workday than they did by cultivating rice.

30. Globalization is affecting the livelihood prospects of rural women not only through its effects on agriculture but also its effects on industry. Trade liberalization, coupled with the free movement of capital, has enabled many developing countries to set up export industries using cheap labour. This has opened up employment opportunities for women, especially in the garment and electronic sectors. In many countries in South and South-East Asia, women are moving in large numbers from rural to urban areas in order to utilize these opportunities, resulting in a distinct feminization of the labour force in export-oriented industries.

31. Previously, many of these women did not have any job prospects at all. The most they could aspire to was life as a maid, prostitute or petty trader. For them, the prospect of employment in export industries has meant an improvement in their livelihood opportunities, with far-reaching economic and social consequences.[9]

32. Livestock production in developing countries is also undergoing a major transformation owing to global demand, in particular from developed countries, for a variety of livestock products. This demand is diversifying livestock production and is leading to the creation of new industries around livestock products, similar to what is happening in the agricultural sector. While the changes in the organization of livestock production may favour male labour, female labour appears to be preferred for the labour-intensive tasks involved in the processing and production of livestock products.

33. While new technologies for agricultural production are opening up rural industries and agribusiness, new employment opportunities are being created. Such opportunities may, however, favour those who have certain skills, capacities and access to social networks and assets. This may pose a danger for women unless they are provided with education and training to acquire the necessary skills. This phenomenon is evident in certain export industries, where employers prefer young women who have some education over older women who often do not. This problem becomes acute when the nature of specialization shifts from relatively unskilled activities to skill-intensive activities.

34. In addition, withdrawal of state provisions for basic services often increases the burden of reproductive work on women, thereby restricting their ability to take advantage of opportunities in productive, paid employment.

35. In general, rural women work long hours under difficult circumstances, often without proper technologies to ease their productive and reproductive work. The wage levels continue to be lower for women than for men. In some organized sectors, the new jobs entail low wages and poor working conditions, and the unorganized agricultural and informal sectors are totally outside the sphere of formal labour laws. In addition, new working arrangements have also been introduced to increase the competitiveness of agribusiness, rural industry, firms in export-processing zones and contract farming. Such arrangements may involve complex contractual arrangements which are

not self-evident to the poorly informed new employees who have little or no formal education.

36. Nevertheless, women in rural areas, and especially those who live in extreme economic deprivation, seem to prefer the option of having access to income, irrespective of the terms. In this connection, domestic work, in the cities or abroad, has long been a major source of employment for the poor women of rural areas. For instance, many Filipinas migrate to become nannies or housekeepers. The intensification of trade in services over the past two decades has increased and broadened the scope for such work for women in many parts of the developing world.

37. By and large, the benefits accruing to rural women and men through the new economic opportunities brought about by globalization differ owing to prevailing gender norms and inequalities. Men appear to be reluctant to assume work traditionally associated with women (in particular child-rearing responsibilities) unless there is an increase in status or the work is well paid. Women may be reluctant to assume work traditionally associated with men, but may do so out of need.

IV. Changing patterns of labour mobility

38. With the ongoing process of impoverishment in rural areas owing to land scarcity, a loss of its productive and monetary value and the continuous demand for cheap labour in newly emerging industries, there has been an increase in labour mobility and migration. In this context, there is a trend towards the feminization of migration as women are becoming the preferred workers for lowly paid, casual jobs and easily displaced when their labour is no longer needed. These movements take place mainly from one rural area to another, as young women join the agribusiness workforce; from rural to urban areas, where girls and adult women leave for towns and cities to enter the service and manufacturing sectors, including the export processing zones; and from regions to the international arena, to work as nannies, maids, factory workers, entertainers, or teachers and nurses. In most cases, labour movements are voluntary, and can be either temporary, cyclical or permanent. There has, however, also been a rise in forced migration, such as trafficking in women and girls for sex work, domestic service or sweatshop employment (see A/55/322).

39. There are many actors involved in the migration process. States, private enterprises and market forces influence the structuring and channelling of migratory flows. At the household level, the whole family may be involved in deciding which family member should migrate. At times, middlemen or agencies play a central role in organizing the migration of rural people, with a possible risk of exploitation, in particular of women and girls.

40. Although in general migration results in the redistribution of tasks and responsibilities among those left behind, there appears to be a strong difference in the impact of migration on the division of labour within the household and gender relations, depending on whether it is a woman or a man who is migrating.

A. Situation of women left behind

41. One of the consequences of the increasing migration of male members of the household is the increased workload for women who must take on additional tasks and responsibilities. The impact of the additional workload on women is strongly felt, in particular in areas in which social support systems and services are weak or have been eroded. Children, in particular girls, are often called upon to assume some of the domestic tasks, thereby compromising their own education.

42. Women employ different strategies to compensate for the loss of male labour. They may organize labour exchange groups with other women, work longer hours themselves or, if they have the means from remittance and other income sources, hire additional labour. They might also adopt such strategies as reducing the area under cultivation or switching to less labour-intensive but also less nutritious crops. In spite of the increasing burden placed upon women, such situations may have empowering effects since they are afforded the opportunity to acquire new skills and capacities.

43. In societies in which, in the absence of the husband, the woman has to move in with her husband's relatives or patriarchal control is passed on to other male relatives, she cannot achieve control of household resources and is thus adversely affected by her husband's migration.

B. When women leave

44. Apart from economic reasons which are of primary importance, women, in particular young single women, tend to migrate in order to escape the hardship of rural life and patriarchal and social control.

45. Women tend to migrate using a network that assists them in finding a job and which serves as a safety net in times of emergencies. Such a network can, however, also weaken their ability to utilize the opportunities that the migratory process affords, such as being exposed and becoming accustomed to new values, roles and market demands. Those women who do manage to develop new skills often decide to build an independent life rather than resume their former roles in the household.

46. With increased demand for cheap female labour and aggressive job advertising on the part of prospective employers, rural women who are relatively isolated from the outside world can be faced with the risks of trafficking and HIV/AIDS.

C. Migrants who return

47. Men and women migrants often have to renegotiate their position within the relationship, household and community upon their return. Men tend to resume their decision-making position in the household more easily than women. On the other hand, long-term migrants often do not wish to resume their traditional work and prefer to engage in activities that earn a better income or bring higher status. The implication for households is that women continue to fulfil these tasks. For example, in western Sudan, returning male migrants prefer to engage in trade rather than resume agricultural work in order to maintain their income.

48. When women migrants return, they are in general less likely to fit into their former roles and tend to abandon more easily local traditions, supposedly because their nature is more restrictive for women than for men. They are also more inclined to challenge the established gender roles and prevailing customs in the family. This may create strong conflicts, leading to women migrating once again.

49. The pressure to leave again tends to be strong when the money sent home by a female migrant has been used in a way other than she anticipated (e.g., spent rather than saved or invested). This leaves her with neither savings nor an economic base for the future. This, for single women, can diminish their prospects of getting married, and for women with economic dependants, could mean going back to the starting point.

D. Remittances

50. In general, migration increases remittances to rural areas and strengthens linkages between rural and urban areas. In addition, remittances from migrants improve the quality of life in rural households, although their long-term impact and importance in sustaining rural life differ. A distinction can be made between remittances that are used for household welfare and remittances used for investment purposes.

51. The impact of remittances on household well-being depends very much upon who in the household controls the income. Income controlled by women tends to be invested in the well-being of the household and its members, rather than spent on conspicuous consumer items. Men tend to buy such consumer items as radios, bicycles and cars, even in instances when their income may be needed for household survival.

52. Remittances sent by men tend to arrive less regularly than those sent by women, and men take a larger share of their earnings for their own personal use (e.g., for alcohol, a second wife, cigarettes), whereas women are more likely to invest in production input (e.g., cattle, payment of debts, fertilizers etc.). Remittances sent by daughters tend to arrive on a more regular basis, in particular transfers from woman to woman, although research has shown that, in some cases, young and unmarried women tend to keep a larger portion of their income for themselves.

V. Household dynamics

53. With increased market integration, most rural households cannot survive exclusively on traditional farming and have to diversify their sources of income. Therefore, globalization is accompanied by an emerging diversity of household types and changes in the division of labour and decision-making relations within the household.

A. Changes in the structure of rural households

54. An increasing number of households are headed by women and consist of several generations. Although the household members are often spatially split as a result of migration (multi-spatial households), close linkages are maintained.

55. The structure of multi-generational households varies. Apart from the typical extended family set-up, multi-generational households may include additional kin or may have a missing middle generation owing to migration or to HIV/AIDS-related death, in particular in Africa. This results in a growing number of households in which grandmothers, single mothers or even children are looking after extended households which also include non-family members.

56. Households headed by women need to be recognized as a separate category which includes single-person households and households of two or three generations. Where men are away on temporary and seasonal migration, women may be head of the household on a temporary basis. In these households, men may continue to hold the decision-making power. In households in which the woman is not married, is widowed or divorced, has been abandoned, or her husband has been killed or has disappeared in times of conflict, long-term changes may occur in the household structure and women have the decision-making power and the responsibility for its members.

B. Changing patterns of household division of labour

57. As discussed above, one effect of globalization is a sharp increase in the diversification of the different types of work in which household members may engage. This, as well as changes in household structure, is altering the division of labour within households.

58. The opening up of new opportunities, such as wage labour, high-value crop production or income-generating activities, can increase economic returns but will also increase the demand for labour. The majority of rural households respond by restructuring their household division of labour, whereby women and children may be disproportionately burdened. Child labour for poor rural households is particularly important for achieving livelihood security. Children, in many instances escaping the social and legal constraints that restrict the work options for adult women and men, are able to go almost anywhere and do any type of work, such as work as a porter, shoe shiner, street vendor and the like.

59. Women's labour is particularly indispensable and often irreplaceable in rural areas. While men may be able to shift their work performance in accordance with the available work opportunities, women do not have the same flexibility. Productive labour of rural women includes non-remunerated family labour (unpaid family work) and paid labour (wage labour and piece work). In household production, rural women's work is characterized as multi-tasking and labour intensive as they shoulder the responsibility for productive and reproductive tasks. Yet, policy makers do not adequately recognize the contribution of women and children to rural economies. Although there has been some progress made in including women's unpaid work in official statistics, in most countries this issue is not on the agenda.

C. Impact of change on gender relations and decision-making

60. The influence of women on the decision-making process in the household and the community is a reflection of customs and cultures and of power relations. These relations are deeply embedded in society and are resistant to change. Globalization, which includes the development of new information technologies, is, however, having a major impact on traditional decision-making patterns. The increasing involvement of women in non-traditional activities and paid employment and changes in household structures have brought about renegotiations of gender relations, with the outcome dependent upon individual choices, the sociocultural context and economic factors. This may result in the greater access of women to decision-making power but also an increased risk of their being subjected to domestic violence.

61. In many countries, the most visible changes in gender relations relate to marriage. As rural women adjust to economic change and earn an independent income and gain access to new ideas or lifestyles, the factors influencing their choice of a partner tend to alter. For example, a woman may place more emphasis on personal characteristics than on economic prospects

and cultural expectations. Throughout the world, there are growing numbers of women choosing to delay marriage or remain single while still choosing to have children. There are communities in which migrant unmarried women returning home are looked at as particularly desirable marriage partners owing to their economic independence, skills and abilities. There are, however, also communities in which these gains are perceived as a threat, making it more difficult for the women to marry and adjust to the community.

62. The greater the degree of exposure of rural women to cultural and social change in the rest of the world, including human rights instruments, and the stronger their economic position and influence in the household and community, the more likely it is that change will also shape and reinforce their independent decision-making roles and influence gender relations.

63. The process of globalization, with the expanding role of the private sector and increasing decentralization in decision-making, has also created opportunities for the broader participation of women in local governance.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

64. The participants in the expert group meeting agreed that, in the context of globalization, rural women encounter new opportunities as well as additional negative circumstances and limitations.

65. Globalization has been associated with increased feminization of the labour force, as the female share of employment has grown throughout the world. Much of the increase in rural areas has resulted from a movement of female labour from the subsistence sector to the paid economy.

66. The ongoing changes have the potential to expand employment and income opportunities for rural women, thus increasing their autonomy, self-esteem, choices and decision-making power within and outside the household. Such a process is contributing to a weakening of traditional gender values of society and promoting gender equality.

67. Increased employment of women has, however, often been associated with poor working conditions, low pay, lack of work-related benefits and, often, short-term employment. In addition, the increased participation of women in the paid workforce has not diminished the unequal distribution of domestic responsibilities. Such factors continue to support existing gender inequalities.[10]

68. Since economic integration entails shifts in the nature of economic specialization, some activities will inevitably contract as others expand. This implies that, within the rural sector, some will find their livelihood prospects threatened even as overall opportunities expand. In this sense, the effects of globalization are bound to be uneven across different population groups in a given country. Thus, the benefits accruing to women and men would differ owing to the constraints posed by their differential access to resources and by gender norms that shape their willingness and capacity to take advantage of new opportunities.

69. Rural women can be more adversely affected by changing economic circumstances because they are at a disadvantage, compared to men, in terms of education, training, domestic responsibilities, lack of access to information and isolation from social networks. The long-term prospects for women depend not only on their assets and abilities but also on the existing norms impinging on the social division of labour. To the extent that women have inferior endowments and that laws, policies and sociocultural norms discriminate against them, their long-term prospects will be inferior to those of men.

70. In considering long-term prospects, it is important to bear in mind that sociocultural norms are in a constant process of transformation, partly as a response to economic forces. It is therefore important to consider how the economic forces unleashed by globalization, in combination with the diffusion of foreign values and norms, interact with the existing domestic norms. In particular, it is necessary to identify where and how these forces are changing existing norms and where they are reinforcing them.

71. The participants in the meeting agreed that, in order to reduce the vulnerability of rural women in the short term, there is a need to develop an appropriate support system to assist them in their survival strategies. In the long term, in order to achieve and sustain the benefits that might be associated with globalization, it is necessary to design interventions that will improve the skills and capacities of women in order to secure their livelihoods in a more competitive environment. Moreover, it is necessary to devise

measures aimed at changing the existing norms that shape the gender division of labour.

72. In addition, it is important to create an enabling policy environment for improving the situation of rural women, which would include the design and implementation of a gender-sensitive macroeconomic policy framework and social support systems which would accommodate women's productive and reproductive roles and encourage a more equal gender division of labour in the household.

73. The recommendations below are proposed in an effort to ensure that women benefit from the opportunities of globalization and that its adverse effects are minimized. The implementation of these recommendations at all levels should be based on the needs and priorities of women, as identified by participatory rural processes, and should focus on the following areas: human rights and labour standards; women's livelihoods and work; empowerment and capacity-building through access to training, technology and basic services; migration and gender relations; and further research and policy formulation.

A. Human rights and labour standards

74. The views of women should be taken into account by Governments and parliaments in the formulation of new laws and regulations, and in changing existing laws which contravene the principle of equality between women and men. Practical measures for the implementation of international instruments should be promoted.

75. All relevant human rights instruments should be fully applied to rural women by Governments. Particular attention should be given by States parties to the implementation of article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

76. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should develop a general recommendation on article 14 of the Convention and specifically request the reporting States parties to pay attention to the situation of rural women in the context of globalization.

77. The equal right of women to property and inheritance should be fully and unconditionally recognized and implemented. Compliance with international standards of equality, including women's property rights, should be protected and promoted by Governments. Governments should undertake every effort to support the implementation of Commission on Human Rights resolutions 2000/13 and 2001/34, on the right of women to equal ownership of, access to and control over land and other property, and equal access to adequate housing.

78. Governments, international organizations, including those of the United Nations system, and non-governmental organizations should, as a matter of priority, promote awareness of the legal property rights of rural women through the: (a) dissemination of national and international legal instruments; (b) provision of literacy training for rural women; (c) provision of legal assistance; (d) raising awareness of current discrimination; and (e) provision of gender-sensitive training for implementers.

79. The International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and international standards of gender equality and human rights should be incorporated into national law and the codes of conduct of transnational corporations. Their observance should be monitored by Governments, relevant international organizations (e.g., ILO), trade unions, non-governmental organizations and other actors in civil society.

80. Training programmes and discussions aimed at both rural women and men to promote gender awareness should be organized by national and local governments, human rights groups and other non-governmental organizations in order to encourage the sharing of parental roles and domestic duties by men.

81. Governments should eliminate de jure and/or de facto job discrimination against rural migrants and abolish all discriminatory regulations affecting the living and working opportunities of rural migrants in urban areas, where appropriate.

82. Governments and human rights and women's groups should provide information to rural migrant women on their human rights and international standards of equality. Governments should also provide these women with legal and consular support, as appropriate.

B. Women's livelihoods and work

83. Governments, the private sector and civil society should jointly develop policies and projects and consolidate resources in order to improve infrastructure and provide job opportunities in rural areas.

84. The functioning of financial institutions in rural areas should be analysed by Governments and local authorities, with a view to making them more accessible to rural women. This should include the provision of support to revolving credit systems which are well suited to assisting cooperative ventures in rural areas.

85. Governments, donors, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should develop specific assistance programmes and advisory services for the development of the economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures, matching the requirements of the market economy.

86. Governments, through appropriate policy regulations, should protect national resources and biodiversity and should invest in eco- and cultural tourism in rural areas so as to enable rural women to develop new economic activities.

87. The indigenous knowledge of rural women and their experience in subsistence production and environmental management should be recognized by national and local governments and development experts as a resource, and should be integrated into formal programmes.

88. Support for rural women by Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should not be confined to microenterprises. Rather, it should be directed at different scales of enterprise and women should be supported to expand their enterprises according to their needs and the possibilities available in the given environment.

89. In order to enhance the participation of women in the labour market, improve their bargaining power and facilitate social contacts, Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should support initiatives aimed at strengthening social networks, which are a source of support and information.

C. Empowerment and capacity-building through access to training, technology and basic services

90. Governments, non-governmental organizations, the mass media and other actors in civil society should organize educational and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at the transformation of cultural norms towards gender equality and encourage the private and public sectors to be more gender-sensitive.

91. Education, information and training for rural women should continue to be assigned high priority. Information services for rural women entrepreneurs should be expanded, based on an analysis of rapidly changing and new market opportunities.

92. Agricultural training programmes and educational institutions should revise their curricula and methods of work in order to respond to the needs of rural women in a rapidly changing global context. They should also provide rural women with information on emerging job opportunities.

93. Governments and local authorities should develop exchange programmes at the school level for rural and urban girls so as to familiarize them with the living conditions in each sphere and introduce them to the opportunities in each area.

94. Governments, international organizations, including those of the United Nations system, educational institutions and non-governmental organizations should create opportunities for rural women from various regions and countries to exchange experience and information, to network and to engage in mutually beneficial projects.

95. Rural women should be more actively supported by Governments and the private sector in gaining access to the opportunities provided by new agricultural and information and communication technologies. Such facilities must be made available at the level of rural villages.

96. Governments should ensure the provision of basic services in education and health, including maternal and childcare services, and devise them in accordance with the needs of rural women and girls, including by means of distance and informal education programmes. The private sector should support such activities.

97. Governments and the private sector should provide support for community initiatives for the care

of abandoned or orphaned children and other vulnerable members of the community.

98. In order to improve the negotiating positions and skills of rural women in the household and community and to strengthen their self-esteem, self-confidence and awareness of their rights, national and local governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations should provide training to rural women in capacity-building.

99. Governments, political parties, local authorities and non-governmental organizations should:

(a) Facilitate the participation of women in decision-making bodies at the local level by providing training and capacity-building programmes. Affirmative action programmes, including quotas or targets, might be introduced as interim measures, as appropriate;

(b) Support and encourage the equal participation of rural women in the leadership of rural producer associations.

D. Migration and gender relations

100. Non-governmental organizations should organize training programmes for women who must assume greater responsibilities in the absence of male members of the household, in order to support them in the performance of all tasks related to the new work requirements.

101. Governments, in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, should promote the establishment of training programmes, services and community centres for migrant rural women in order to upgrade their skills and provide them with information on existing laws, customs and cultural traditions in the receiving countries.

102. Governments, financial institutions and non-governmental organizations should provide rural communities and migrant women with information on modern ways of financial management, banking and investment opportunities so as to enable them to achieve the best returns for their remittances and savings.

103. Donors should provide financial support to non-governmental organizations involved in providing direct counselling to female migrants from rural areas.

104. In view of increased trafficking in women and children, Governments, international organizations and national and international law enforcement agencies should provide effective protection to rural women migrants and their children and inform them of their rights.

E. Further research and policy formulation

105. Governments, international organizations, including those of the United Nations system, and research institutes should compile data on and analyse the impact of globalization on rural communities from a gender perspective. The data and information should be disaggregated by region and sex and made context-specific in order to reflect rural women's work, including that in the informal sector. It should be followed by further empirical research and case studies in various economic and sociocultural contexts, in order to assess the specific challenges for, and opportunities available to, rural women.

106. Governments and international organizations, including those of the United Nations system, should intensify their efforts to reflect women's unpaid work in rural households in national statistics and in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.

107. The changing nature of households and gender relations in rural areas in the current global context should be studied by research institutes so as to enable Governments and international organizations to adjust policies and programmes in order to respond to rural women's needs.

108. The International Organization for Migration and international and national research institutes should be encouraged to conduct comparative long-term research in order to document the diverse patterns of migration and their impact on gender relations and gender identities throughout the migration cycle.

109. Special studies should be undertaken by Governments, research institutes and the private sector to establish the best model for integrating rural women in the field of information and communication technology, in particular in connection with the preparation of the World Summit on the Information Society.[11]

110. In order to implement the findings of the expert group meeting in a coherent manner and coordinate the efforts of various actors towards the improvement of the situation of rural women, a high-level policy consultation should be convened at the United Nations to set priorities and outline critical strategies that would meet the needs and aspirations of rural women in the context of globalization.

111. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to pay attention to the situation of rural women in the context of its deliberations on the priority themes included in its multi-year programme of work.

112. The agencies and programmes of the United Nations system dealing with issues of development should address the specific needs of rural women in the context of globalization and design the means for their empowerment. They should also ensure that a gender perspective is consistently incorporated into their policies and programmes.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference* ..., annex I.

[4] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* (E/2000/23), chap. II, sect. A.

[5] See ibid., *2001, Supplement No. 3* (E/2001/23), chap. II, sect. A. To be issued.

[6] See sect. II.A of E/CN.4/1998/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/50, E/CN.4/1999/4-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/45 and E/CN.4/2000/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/54, respectively.

[7] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 7* (E/1998/27), chap. I, sect. D.

[8] Children of all ages are a significant component of household survival strategies. They perform various tasks in connection with domestic work and household production, and generate cash income through employment, primarily in the informal sector.

[9] See, for example, Z. Tzannatos, "Growth, adjustment and the labour market: effects on women workers" (paper presented at the Fourth Conference of the International Association for Feminist Economics, Tours, France, 5-7 July 1995).

[10] See *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: Globalization, Gender and Work* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.IV.8), chap. VI, sect. B.

[11] The Council of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) decided, on 28 July 2001, to proceed with the preparation of the World Summit, which will be convened in 2003 under the auspices of ITU, in close cooperation with other interested organizations of the United Nations system.

United Nations A/56/269

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 August 2001
English
Original: French

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session
Item 20 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Special assistance for the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 55/166 of 14 December 2000, the present report describes the financial and material assistance provided by the United Nations system to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in its economic recovery and reconstruction process.

II. General situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

2. The Democratic Republic of the Congo covers an area of 2,345,000 square kilometres, which makes it the third-largest country in Africa. The country is bounded by nine others: the Republic of the Congo to the north-west, the Central African Republic to the north, the Sudan to the north-east, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania to the east, Zambia to the south-east and Angola to the south-west. On the far west it has a small stretch of coastline on the Atlantic. The landscape is dominated by a vast central basin (covering 47 per cent of the territory), around which the land rises gradually (from 500 to 1,500 metres in altitude) and ultimately reaches impressive heights of over 1,500 metres in the eastern part of the country.

3. Growing at an average rate of 3.1 per cent annually, the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is estimated to have exceeded 52 million at the end of 2000 and is expected to reach 80 million by 2015. The population is very unevenly distributed and heavily concentrated in urban areas, which since 1975 have accounted for over 30 per cent of the total. The country has perhaps 10 cities with from 100,000 to 600,000 inhabitants. The capital, Kinshasa, accounts for about 6 million of the 15 million urban dwellers.

4. For more than four years the country has been undergoing a major crisis due to successive wars. The first of these erupted in the eastern part of the country in 1996 and brought down the Mobutu regime on 17 May 1997. A little more than a year later, on 2 August 1998, another war broke out, again in the eastern part of the country. This conflict, in which three rebel

* A/56/150.

** The delay in the submission of this report was due to the time needed to gather information and obtain the necessary clearances.

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movements, supported by the regular forces of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, are pitted against the central Government, which has requested and received assistance from Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe (members of the Southern African Development Community), has proved to be even deadlier and more destructive (over 2 million persons killed and 1.8 million displaced), in part because it has resulted in the de facto partition of the country into separate administrative areas, depending on which party to the conflict controls the particular territory.

5. Despite the ongoing conflict, several attempts were made to reorganize the political structure of the country in the areas under the control of the Government, though not without dissent. New political parties were approved and allowed to function under the decree-laws promulgated in 1999 on the organization and operation of political parties and associations and the regulation of non-profit organizations. In 2000 the Government also established a constituent and legislative assembly — transition parliament, whose members were appointed with the mandate, among other things, of drafting a new constitution to be submitted to a popular referendum.

6. However, most of those involved in politics, as well as the international community, viewed those actions on the part of the Government as an attempt to bypass the inter-Congolese dialogue arising out of the Ceasefire Agreement signed on 10 July 1999 in Lusaka at the initiative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The Ceasefire Agreement provides for a procedure for peaceful resolution of the conflict and the restoration of peace. The procedure involves, among other things, the sending of a neutral military observer mission under the auspices of the United Nations, the opening of inter-Congolese political negotiations leading to the establishment of a new institutional order, the sending of a United Nations interposition force and the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces. The Security Council, which authorized the deployment of military liaison officers starting in August 1999, by resolution 1279 (1999) of 30 November 1999 established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

7. Rapid implementation of the Lusaka Agreement was impeded by problems caused by the belligerents and arising even among allies, the most blatant being the second confrontation between Ugandan and Rwandan troops in Kisangani from 5 to 10 June 2000, which suddenly altered the face of the war, and the rejection by President Laurent-Désiré Kabila's Government of the facilitator designated for the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana, together with that Government's expressed intention to revise the Ceasefire Agreement.

8. Major General Joseph Kabila, who became President on 25 January 2001, has reassured the nation and the international community by expressing openness and a desire for peace and by his policy of facilitating the deployment of MONUC troops, disengagement of forces on the front line and the work of the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire. This turn of events has enabled MONUC to deploy its troops in several areas on both sides of the front. With regard to the inter-Congolese dialogue, the signing of the Declaration of Fundamental Principles of the Inter-Congolese Political Negotiations in Lusaka on 4 May 2001 by the Government and the two rebel movements is a step in the right direction.

9. The achievements of the regional summit held on 15 February 2001 in Lusaka and the meetings of the Security Council with the Political Committee for the Implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement on 21 and 22 February 2001 in New York revived hopes for progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The parties committed themselves to the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment of forces, signed in April and December 2000, respectively. From 15 to 26 May, a major Security Council mission visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other countries in the Great Lakes region and held important consultations on the future of the peace process.

10. The Security Council, by resolution 1355 (2001), extended the mandate of MONUC until 15 June 2002 and called upon all parties to comply with the relevant United Nations resolutions relating to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly concerning the withdrawal of foreign forces and the disengagement of forces and other belligerents in accordance with the Harare sub-plans. Thanks to its "peace barge" project, MONUC has succeeded in reopening the Congo River to navigation and to launch some of its quick-impact projects, including the resumption of activity in Mbandaka, Kalemie,

Kisangani, Goma, Kabinda and Kinshasa. In addition, a dialogue has been started on a regional level between President Joseph Kabila and leaders of neighbouring countries, particularly Uganda and Rwanda. In that context, a tripartite meeting was organized on the initiative of the Secretary-General, when he attended the OAU summit in Lusaka in July of this year.

11. Because the ceasefire has been holding in recent weeks and the Government has shown its willingness to make an effort to restart the economy and resume international cooperation, optimism has grown about the chances of bringing the conflict to an end.

12. Despite its enormous potential and the favourable economic situation it enjoyed in the early 1960s, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is now in a difficult economic, financial and social situation. This vast territory, which has immense natural resources (mineral, agricultural, forestry, energy and other), continues to have some of the lowest social indicators in the world and is among the poorest countries in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report 2001*, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ranks 142nd out of the 164 countries evaluated with a human development index of 0.430, among the lowest in the world.

13. The gloomy economic picture, very evident in 1999, deteriorated further in 2000 and the first quarter of 2001. The macroeconomic environment continues to show the effects of the conflict, which has caused production to shrink sharply, and of some government measures taken while President Laurent-Désiré Kabila was in office which have proved to be harmful. Despite new measures taken to adjust course, the new Government has inherited runaway inflation, monetary instability, a persistent fiscal deficit, a very heavy external debt and a climate of great social tension.

14. The latest economic liberalization measures taken by the country's new administration in the first quarter of 2001, consisting of the publication of new foreign exchange regulations authorizing the possession of foreign currencies and their use in commercial transactions, liberalization of the diamond industry and the expressed willingness to collaborate with the Bretton Woods institutions, have encouraged the country's development partners. The Government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are already working on an interim macroeconomic stabilization programme.

III. Economic situation

15. Economic activity declined from 1997 to 2000, especially over the past two years. Gross domestic product (GDP) underwent a cumulative drop of 21.9 per cent during the period 1997-2000, an average annual decline of 5.3 per cent. The decline in activity during that period was observed in all sectors of the economy. Agriculture, which makes up over 50 per cent of GDP, accounted for 41.1 per cent of the decline in GDP, while manufacturing accounted for 17.8 per cent, services 38.4 per cent and duties and taxes 2.7 per cent. The collapsed economic growth during these years reflects the negative impact of observed trends in the level of the main components of domestic demand. Household consumption accounted for over 90 per cent of the decline in GDP during the period.

A. Inflation and exchange rate

16. The average annual inflation rate from 1997 to 2000 was 212.4 per cent based on the consumer price index as calculated by the country's central bank. That was still an extremely high level of inflation, although lower than the rate during the period 1993-1996, when it reached record levels (averaging 1,984 per cent annually and reaching 9,796.9 per cent in the year 1994). The high rate of inflation from 1997 to 2000 and during the preceding periods is one of the factors leading to the breakdown of the financial system.

17. Because of its outward orientation, the country's economy is heavily dependent on export revenues and inflows of external capital. In a context of worsening government deficits and loose money creation, brought to a halt only a few weeks ago, the decline in the supply of foreign currency has had the effect of destabilizing the foreign exchange market. The market has been overwhelmed by the continual depreciation of the national currency with respect to foreign currencies and the widening gap between the official and unofficial rates of exchange. After appreciating by 8.1 per cent against the United States dollar by the end of December 1997, the rate of exchange of the national currency has depreciated for the past three years by 69.4 percent (1998), 85.9 percent (1999) and 81.9 percent (2000), respectively. To soften the impact of frequent depreciations of the exchange rate on the prices of goods and services and limit the effect on the State budget of wages indexed to the rate of exchange,

since the second half of 1998 the Government has managed the interbank exchange rate. As a result of this policy, the gap between the official and unofficial exchange rates widened from 3.8 per cent at the end of December 1997 to 466.7 per cent and 182.0 per cent at the end of 1999 and 2000, respectively.

B. Monetary situation

18. The monetary situation has been marked by exponential growth in the rate of formation of domestic liquidity, with deleterious effects on domestic prices and the exchange rate. Driven by domestic credit, chiefly government credit, the money supply grew by 51.9 per cent in 1997, 157.8 per cent in 1998, 363.3 per cent in 1999 and 533.2 per cent in 2000. The rate of money creation in 1997 was the lowest for the period because public finances were then sound.

C. External account and external debt

19. With regard to the external account, the economic situation has been marked by a downward trend in both exports and imports and a considerable reduction in trade surpluses. The country's export volume shrank from $1,448,900,000 in 1997 to $792,700,000 in 2000. The current transactions deficit averaged 4.5 per cent of GDP during the period 1997-2000, the overall balance of payments deficit 8.6 per cent.

20. As at 30 June 2000, the country's stock of external debt stood at $12.3 billion, and the arrears on the debt, both interest and principal, equalled $8.7 billion. The stock of debt averaged 241.2 per cent of GDP from 1997 to 1999, while the servicing on the debt rose from 479.6 per cent to 830.1 per cent of exports of goods and services.

D. Official development assistance

21. In 1999 the Democratic Republic of the Congo received $194,758,000, as against $140,203,000 in 1998, an increase of 39 per cent. This upturn reversed the downward trend in assistance to the country observable since 1996, with declines of -48 per cent in 1997 and -46 per cent in 1998. The upturn was attributable to multilateral aid, which increased by 37 per cent in 1999, particularly from the United Nations system (up 37 per cent) and the European Union (up 36 per cent). The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have continued to limit their support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to fact-finding and evaluation missions, the costs of which are hard to estimate. Bilateral aid, on the other hand, declined by 50.54 per cent from $45.5 million to $22.5 million.

22. Despite the upturn, official development assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains trammelled by the same factors that have operated for a decade, namely: (i) continuation of the freeze on structural cooperation between the country and most of its major external partners that has lasted since 1991, following the unfortunate pillaging that occurred in the years 1991 to 1993; (ii) a wait-and-see attitude on the part of donors, despite the initiation of a macroeconomic dialogue as discussed above, in the light of the two wars the country has recently experienced, the first in 1996 and 1997 and the second beginning in August 1998. In implementing its interim programme, the Government thus faces a serious problem of external financing, which is essential in view of the country's meagre domestic resources and the unresolved problem of its external debt arrears, which stands in the way of conventional official development assistance mechanisms. Humanitarian aid has thus remained the preferred form of assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Between 1998 and 1999 humanitarian aid increased by 29 per cent, accounting for 39 per cent of the total in 1999. However that percentage is lower than in previous years, when it accounted for 76.8 per cent, 64.03 per cent and 46.41 per cent of the total in 1996, 1997 and 1998, respectively.

E. Social and humanitarian situation

23. Continuing negative economic growth has made serious inroads in the production of social goods and services in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With shrinking State resources and the fall in official development assistance, the lowest levels of spending have been in health and education. With few exceptions, the social and humanitarian situation continues to be characterized by the factors mentioned in the previous report, namely:

(a) The low percentage of public expenditure on the social sector due to the termination of all bilateral cooperation:

(i) Spending on the health sector fell from 0.8 per cent of GNP in 1990 to 0.02 per cent in 1998, compared with an average of 1.8 per cent of GNP for sub-Saharan Africa. It made up 0.3 per cent of overall spending in 1998, compared with 3.9 per cent in 1990; as a result, there has been a resurgence of diseases which had earlier been under control, such as trypanosomiasis, tuberculosis and leprosy, and which are to blame for an incredibly high mortality rate;

(ii) Education spending remained at about 0.1 per cent of GNP between 1990 and 1998. The average for sub-Saharan Africa and that for the developing countries in 1998 stood at just under 5 per cent and 3 per cent of GNP respectively;

(b) An under-five mortality rate fluctuating around 207 per thousand live births, whereas the average for countries with low levels of human development stood at 169 per thousand in 1997. The maternal mortality rate rose to 1,870 per 100,000 live births;

(c) Life expectancy at birth of 51.2 years in 1998 (52.7 years for women and 49.6 years for men) as compared with 53 years in 1987. This decline is due to an increase in mortality: infant mortality rose from 127 to 137 per 1,000 live births, the under-five mortality from 213 to 220 per 1,000 live births and maternal mortality from 1,870 to 2,000 per 100,000 live births. These unusually high rates reflect a serious human/demographic disaster overshadowed by the impact of the war. It is estimated that: (i) of the 2,360,000 to 2,500,000 babies born each year, over 203,000 die during their first week of life, over 323,000 before their first birthday and over 518,000 before their fifth birthday; (ii) between 47,000 and 50,000 women die every year in childbirth, including over 6,000 in the capital Kinshasa; and (iii) the unusually high number of maternal deaths is due in part to illegal abortions that often result in death (30 per cent of girls under the age of 19, or roughly 700,000 girls aged between 12 and 19 years, have abortions);

(d) An educational enrolment ratio in 1997 of 39 per cent (an overall figure, including all levels of schooling), compared with averages of 59 per cent for the developing countries and 44 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa;

(e) An adult literacy rate of 58.9 per cent (41 per cent for women and 71.3 per cent for men) in 1998, as compared with 62 per cent in 1985;

(f) The fact that a considerable proportion of the population does not have access to basic services: 41 per cent to health care; 58 per cent to safe drinking water; 82 per cent to health services;

(g) Continuing and unchecked population movements caused by the war and the considerable increase in the number of displaced people, especially in North and South Kivu where there are more than a million displaced persons, not counting the unknown numbers of people hiding in the forests;

(h) A very disturbing increase in unemployment: statistics on the numbers of public servants and private-sector workers show a fall of 36.1 per cent in employment in these two sectors; the overall figure for public- and private-sector employees fell from 928,500 units in 1997 to 593,300 units in 1999.

24. Given the immensity of the crisis reflected in these indicators, we can only conclude this part of the report in the same terms as the previous one, emphasizing the urgent need to restore peace and to prepare and implement a national poverty alleviation plan for those population groups that cannot automatically benefit from a resumption of economic growth, but also to continue humanitarian assistance pending a real economic upturn which will give all the country's people the chance to take a hand in improving their own situation. The plan would take into account the concerns of the most vulnerable sectors of the population, including women, children, unemployed youth and persons infected with HIV/AIDS.

IV. Economic measures and options

25. The developments described above were essentially the result of the difficult wartime situation, exacerbated by policies which showed their limitations by seeking to regulate the entire economy. In his inaugural speech, the new Head of State responded to this situation by saying that in the age of globalization, the country's economy must be liberalized and opened up to foreign capital in order to increase domestic output and diversify exports. An interim programme was adopted for this purpose, with a view to restoring

some measure of macroeconomic stability and ensuring the necessary profitability and security for attracting foreign investments and for a fruitful dialogue with foreign partners on the thorny issue of the country's external debt.

26. The main goal of the interim programme is to break the inflationary spiral and put a stop to the current distortions in the economy, through a tight budgetary policy and a monetary policy compatible with the chosen goals. As to reform measures, the programme calls for the following:

(a) Foreign-exchange policy: Decree-Law No. 004/2001 of 31 January 2001 and the new foreign-exchange regulations confirm the liberalization in this area; the interbank exchange rate will gradually be raised, reducing the disparity with the parallel rate;

(b) Mining and investment policies: (i) a new mining industry code is being prepared, with a view to setting up a tax system compatible with the realities of today's mining industry; (ii) the liberalization of the diamond sector is being completed, abolishing the monopoly which had existed in the sector and restoring the role of purchasing offices; (iii) the new investment code currently under review tends to confirm the basic choice of a social market economy which distinguishes the economic roles to be played by the main social partners (the State, the private sector and civil society);

(c) Prices policy: the regime remains that contained in Decree-Law No. 83/026 of 12 September 1983, which provided for price liberalization, subject to a posteriori monitoring; exceptions were made for a few goods and services considered to be socially sensitive such as water, electric power, fuel and public transport, for which prior approval is required.

V. Situation and challenges relating to governance

27. Throughout 2000, the country struggled to achieve peace and internal consensus. Various initiatives towards that consensus proved unsuccessful, particularly the national consultation initiated by the heads of religious groups, which was intended as a forum for dialogue and reconciliation. The purpose of that consultation, held from 29 February to 11 March and attended by representatives of civil society and of opinion groups, was to prepare the way for the inter-Congolese political talks provided for in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. However, the recommendations produced by the consultation remained without effect; also unsuccessful were the attempts by President Laurent Kabila to convene an inter-Congolese meeting in Libreville, under the leadership of President Omar Bongo, in order to establish a patriotic front, isolate the aggressors and carry on regardless of the Lusaka Agreement.

28. President Joseph Kabila agreed that Sir Ketumile Masire should continue with his task as an impartial facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue. Thus, the Government withdrew the preconditions it had set out, particularly the demand that foreign armed forces should withdraw before any dialogue could begin. On 17 May 2001, in order to consolidate that positive move, President Kabila promulgated Act No. 001/2001 on political parties, superseding Act No. 194 of 17 July 1999, which had been widely criticized in Congolese political circles. On the basis of the declaration of basic principles signed on 4 May in Lusaka by all the parties, the process of selecting provincial representatives was effectively begun by the Facilitator, with a view to convening a preparatory committee scheduled to meet on 20 August 2001, which will discuss inter alia various aspects of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

29. The continuing conflict has had a disastrous impact on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Bukavu, the tension between the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) and the general population was worsened by the forcible exile in February 2000 of Bishop Emmanuel Kataliko, accused of preaching tribal hatred. The measure was rescinded in September 2000, but the bishop died shortly thereafter and his death led to a further deterioration in relations between the population and the rebel movement.

30. Beginning in January 2000, the Ituri district in Orientale province became the theatre of violent inter-ethnic clashes, aggravated by the presence of armed groups; the death toll was between 5,000 and 7,000 and 180,000 persons were displaced. Following an initial mediation effort, a fragile peace reigned in Ituri until December. Struggles within the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération (RCD/ML) rebel movement then brought about a new cycle of violence, which remained unobserved because security issues had forced humanitarian agencies to leave the area. That lack of security culminated in the

murder of six International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) workers in April 2001.

31. The situation has remained particularly worrisome in the eastern provinces, owing to the activities of armed groups, ceasefire violations and ethnic tensions, but also the economic and humanitarian crisis afflicting the population. The United Nations should consider implementing measures to respond to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which will follow the withdrawal of foreign armed forces which are currently responsible for the security of the civilian population in the areas they control. The Security Council has expressed serious concern at the continuing illegal exploitation of the country's plentiful resources, and has decided to extend the mandate of the expert group dealing with that issue, in order to follow up the first report which was produced in April 2000.

32. Aside from violations resulting directly from the conflict, the year 2000 saw a number of examples of illegal arrest and detention, attacks on press freedom and the freedom of association and other acts committed by both the central Government and the rebel movements. Although the signature of a general amnesty decree led to the freeing of many prisoners, particularly in Kinshasa, the arrests continued thereafter and the decree was only partially implemented.

33. The prospects for the human rights situation improved markedly when the new President, Joseph Kabila, took office. Among his first acts as Head of State were the closure of all places of detention not under the authority of the public prosecutors, and the convening of the national conference on human rights (24-29 June 2001) with the participation of 385 delegates representing the country's various provinces and 30 observers from within and outside the country. This conference set priorities in the human rights field in order to initiate the needed reforms, particularly in the area of civil and military justice, including the security forces. The national human rights charter and the national plan of action for the promotion and protection of human rights were also adopted.

34. In conclusion, it is clear that after the long period of apparent immobility which followed the deployment of MONUC in September 1999, there have been significant changes since the beginning of 2001. The turbulent events which have taken place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however tragic, have changed the situation in a relatively positive way. There is now relative calm along the confrontation lines between the various armed forces on the ground, and the Government has agreed that Sir Ketumile Masire should play his part as the impartial facilitator in the inter-Congolese dialogue. The obstacles to be overcome for this dialogue to succeed include (i) the issue of the representation of political parties which are not only very numerous (over 200) but, more importantly, divided into several mutually antagonistic wings; and (ii) the issue of representation of RCD, which is currently divided into two wings, one of which, RCD/ML, has allied itself with the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC).

VI. Situation and challenges of sustainable economic and human development

35. The previous report noted that the situation was worsening year by year, and described challenges in the area of sustainable human development resulting from the chronic instability of the country's political, economic, social and security environment. That observation was elaborated upon and systematized in the first national human development report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, prepared by a team of independent national consultants and published with the assistance of UNDP.

36. The report focuses on governance, that is, the responsibility of the State for sustainable human development. Their study of the human development process since the country gained its independence in 1960 leads the authors to maintain that the State has not properly exercised its authority to ensure: (i) positive partnership with civil society as a series of groups participating in economic, political, social and cultural activities; (ii) a political, legal and macroeconomic environment conducive to productive activities and the security of goods and persons; (iii) support for the private sector as a generator of employment and income; and (iv) a culture of respect for the public interest, guaranteeing the rehabilitation of political life which had been characterized by corruption and impunity. This failure on the part of the State is attributable to both short-term and structural factors.

37. In order to describe the inadequacies of the State and of governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 1960 to 1999, the report assesses sustainable human development on the basis of data relating to the following criteria:

(a) **Access to basic social services** (health, education and employment). The report notes that, despite the liberalization policy adopted in respect of school management and health training, access to health care and education remains insufficient. The quality of teaching and the school enrolment rate have declined steadily. Endemic diseases which have reappeared and spread include diarrhoea, cholera, meningitis, HIV/AIDS, schistosomiasis, tuberculosis, respiratory diseases and sleeping sickness, which have played a greater part in steeply rising mortality than the conflict itself. This is because the liberalization policy has given rise to adverse effects, particularly concerning the residual responsibility of the State for basic infrastructures in the administration of primary health care and in basic education. The report expresses still greater concern regarding the employment situation: the job creation rate appears to be zero, particularly in the modern sector. The civil service and State-owned enterprises are the largest employers, and with their pervasive overmanning problems they are thought to be reaching saturation level. The pension system is highly unreliable, there are no systems of health insurance or worker protection, and the trade union movement has been considerably weakened by workers' lack of bargaining power on the labour market.

(b) **Quality of living conditions** (habitat, housing, environment). The report describes the badly deteriorated condition of living spaces for the country's people. Quality of life is declining in urban areas, with losses of housing and of human lives caused by erosion, siltation and flooding; general insalubrity owing to the lack of appropriate solid and liquid waste management systems; severe overcrowding caused both by the population explosion and by uncontrollable concentrations of population; physical and chemical degradation of land; pollution of all kinds; and above all, deforestation on the periphery of urban areas. The rapid growth of urban population has led to a rise in demand for urban services such as housing, transport infrastructure, water supplies, schools and hospitals, which is a further challenge to the authorities in their task of providing basic infrastructure. However, the report describes two major problems regarding the administrative organization of communes, towns or territories, in terms of urban planning, public works, roads and drainage, etc.: extremely high levels of centralization, depriving officials at the local level of any financial or material means to act; and a dysfunctional dualism between the "environmental protection" and "nature conservation" aspects of government policy. According to the report, the "environmental protection" aspect suffers from the negative effects of that dual structure.

(c) **Involvement by citizens in the management of public affairs**. The report notes that, owing to poor governance, that involvement is at a very low level in the country and therefore cannot contribute any impetus to sustainable human development. Taking the situation of women as an example, the report notes that women have been used for purposes of propaganda and partisan mobilization, rather than treated as fully fledged citizens. Despite the granting to women of the right to vote and stand for election, the creation of ministerial posts for the advancement of women and the appointment of women as government ministers, the social situation of women remains deplorable. Although the enrolment rate for girls has risen steadily since 1960, particularly in universities and other establishments of higher education, in 1999 it was still lower than the rate for boys. As to health, the situation of women is a matter for even greater concern owing to precarious conditions for childbirth and the rise in sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

38. The report concludes that the human underdevelopment observed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is intrinsically linked to poor governance at the economic and political levels. At the political level, the report highlights the fraught relations between the State and civil society resulting from a systemic personalization of power and extreme centralization of State structures. According to the report, the same tensions are apparent between the State and the economic sphere. Poor management of finances and public corporations has not been conducive to the creation of a favourable macroeconomic and institutional environment for stimulating the economic and social activities of households and enterprises. The report concludes by proposing ways forward that should facilitate the restoration of an administration based on the rule of

law, administrative decentralization, participatory democracy and partnership with civil society and the private sector.

VII. Cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations system

39. The continuation of armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2000 for a third consecutive year has further exacerbated the tragic social and economic situation. Judging from the number of persons displaced by the conflict (which rose from 480,000 in November 1999 to almost 2,100,000 in June 2001), the situation has worsened, pointing to the need for greater resources and increased humanitarian activity. Regrettably, international cooperation, whether bilateral or multilateral, remains dependent on progress in the political sphere, particularly on implementation of the Lusaka Agreements. Thus, most partners have established humanitarian assistance programmes to be delivered by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Against the current background of limited resources, United Nations system agencies have continued their cooperation programmes by focusing much of their action on humanitarian activities to benefit the most vulnerable groups. Development efforts have focused on the various aspects of poverty reduction including in the fields of health, agriculture, local development and employment generation, HIV/AIDS control and the promotion of good governance including human rights and national capacity-building.

40. Realization of United Nations system assistance has met with various obstacles which reduce its impact. An appropriate response to the crisis has been hampered by inadequate funding, and difficult access (mostly in the east of the country) to displaced persons for reasons of security. Following the refusal of permits, including by the Government, it has also been hampered by the excessive cost of air transport, which often remained the sole means of transport given the country's large expanse and the advanced state of disrepair of road infrastructure, and by poor telecommunications. Conditions of access have, however, improved thanks to the decision adopted in March 2001 by President Joseph Kabila to allow humanitarian agencies free access throughout the territory, which enabled them to gain access to thousands of persons in dire need; paradoxically, however, access in some areas, mostly in the east of the country, has been constrained due to the growing insecurity. Moreover, the lack of government machinery for coordinating official development assistance, and the absence of a coherent overall development plan, have not allowed for sustainable programming.

41. The efforts of United Nations agencies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also been severely thwarted by certain decisions of the national authorities, including the monetary measure which officially sets the national exchange rate, and the policy of dedollarization of the economy. This particular measure has resulted in a significant erosion of cooperation programme budgets, which thus reduces their expected impact on the ground. United Nations agencies at their request were authorized by the Government to apply a preferential exchange rate of 22.5 Congolese francs to the dollar for much of 2000. However, this preferential rate also proved rigid given the evolution of current exchange market conditions, and the widening gap with respect to the parallel rate prevented the implementation of significant development projects. The abolition in 2001 of the prohibition on the use and possession of dollars as well as the liberalization of the exchange rate will have a positive impact on the volume and extent of assistance which can be provided.

42. In the agricultural sector, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have collaborated on food security through an emergency agricultural project supplying foodstuffs in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, the country's two largest towns, which host many persons displaced by armed conflict. Support has been provided to market gardeners, in particular women, in the form of agricultural requisites and small tools. This intervention has enabled the year-long provision of vegetables and other produce to the population of these two towns, and some income generation for the producers. In the framework of an emergency agricultural programme in Bas-Congo, FAO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have developed synergies in their support for refugees, persons displaced by armed conflict and host populations: FAO supplying agricultural requisites,

WFP, foodstuffs, and UNHCR restoring various social infrastructures.

43. WFP has focused its interventions on emergency assistance operations (displaced persons, refugees and vulnerable groups). As part of assistance provided to displaced persons and vulnerable groups, more than 23,000 tons of foodstuffs were distributed between January 2000 and March 2001 to over a million persons, including 53 per cent children, 31 per cent women and 16 per cent men. Over the same period, nearly 70,000 refugees received some 7,000 tons of foodstuffs.

44. Throughout 2000, in accessible areas of the country, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable groups in the fields of food, health, child protection and assistance to displaced persons. In the field of health, 534 health facilities used by 4,400,000 people received emergency kits and essential medicines, while 700,000 children were vaccinated against measles throughout the country and 20,000 people in Goma and Kinshasa were inoculated against cholera. At the same time, eight health centres were reinstated in Kisangani. In the field of nutrition, 16,000 severely malnourished children in 53 nutrition centres located in Katanga and in the two Kivus received support in the form of therapeutic milk. In the field of education, eight schools were reinstated in Kisangani, and a temporary school for 800 pupils established in Kinshasa. School supplies were distributed to 20,000 refugee pupils in Bas-Congo. Some 40,000 displaced families in the two Kivus, Kisangani and Katanga received assistance in the form of essential supplies, and 4,400 baby kits were distributed to women who had just given birth in camps for displaced persons in Kinshasa, Bas-Congo, Kasai and Katanga.

45. In the field of health, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNDP helped to rehabilitate the health system in six health zones in the provinces of Bandundu, Bas-Congo and Katanga. These activities improved the population's access to health care. In addition to the restoration of infrastructure, health personnel in the targeted areas received training in epidemiological surveillance. This support also involved non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations in income-generating activities. A total of 11 micro-projects were supported, and 120 leaders and grass-roots facilitators were trained to manage them. They acquired such traditional skills as soap-making, fish-salting and bread-making. Initial appraisals noted a high degree of satisfaction among beneficiaries.

46. UNHCR has embarked on a programme of local integration of refugees in the Aru region of Orientale province, as well as the restoration of education and health infrastructure. In Katanga province, as part of its efforts to achieve the local integration of Angolan refugees, UNHCR has established an agricultural project which has been extended to include the indigenous population, thanks to seeds and agricultural tools contributed by FAO. This population benefits on the same basis as refugees from medical and school infrastructure built by UNHCR in refugee camps.

47. Local communities in the South and North Kivu provinces have benefited from a grass-roots development programme funded by UNDP and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). This support has facilitated the restoration of social infrastructure such as schools and health centres. It has also enabled vulnerable groups to benefit from small subsidies for income-generating activities.

48. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), for its part, has been involved in efforts to combat illiteracy. With the collaboration of other United Nations agencies, it has pursued this particular form of poverty eradication by establishing literacy classes in working-class neighbourhoods in Kinshasa through a non-governmental organization known as the Philanthropic Association of Congo Mothers (Association Philanthropique des Mamans au Congo).

49. Immunization activities in the form of national immunization days have been realized through the establishment of a broad partnership which has brought WHO and UNICEF into consultation with agencies such as MONUC, WFP, UNHCR, UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). By the end of the operation, 10 million children under five years had been immunized against poliomyelitis, with a view to preventing transmission of the wild poliomyelitis virus and global eradication of the disease; 8.8 million children from 6 months to under 5 years had received a dose of vitamin A and 1.3 million children from 9 months to under 5 years had been immunized against measles. Most United Nations

system agencies were mobilized on the ground to ensure the success of the operation.

50. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WHO have embarked on joint activity to build the capacities of state structures in reproductive health, including to reduce maternal mortality. The popularization of "reproductive health" strategies has involved more than 300 health professionals and other targeted categories in 82 health areas located in seven of the country's provinces. In addition, 21 persons have been trained in the country and abroad in contraceptive techniques.

51. In all projects and programmes established by United Nations system agencies, particular attention has been accorded to the capacity-building of supported structures. A significant activity meriting attention is the training of more than 150 government and civil society-organization experts in disaster prevention and management. It was thus that from 8 November to 15 December 2000, UNDP, WHO, OCHA and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) organized — with the collaboration of the Government — a series of workshops on conflict prevention and management. The workshops covered the following themes: floods, erosion, industrial, chemical, technological and environmental accidents, epidemics, and internal conflicts and displaced persons.

52. The United Nations system has also been mobilized in efforts to control HIV/AIDS. In order to better articulate support in this area, the HIV/AIDS thematic group established several years ago has remained operational, despite the specific state of affairs in the country. The presence of several foreign armed forces from countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence, such as Uganda, has exacerbated an already highly worrying situation. It has become vital to raise awareness of all sectors of society, particularly decision makers and opinion leaders. To that end, the United Nations system has embarked on advocacy at all levels. UNICEF, in collaboration with other agencies, has supported the National Youth Forum by providing it with the tools to encourage young people to change behaviour.

53. The international week for poverty eradication whose 2000 theme was "Breaking the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS" also proved an ideal occasion for advocacy to the Government and entire population. From 16 to 24 October, targeted activities were organized by all United Nations system agencies with UNDP coordination. Special days were devoted to subthemes such as HIV/AIDS and the school environment, HIV/AIDS and trade unions, HIV/AIDS and the prison environment. Throughout the week, official speeches, theatrical plays, songs, etc. broadcast on radio and TV and given newspaper coverage brought the message home to the entire population. The active involvement of the United Nations system culminated in the hosting of five national participants at the African Development Forum organized in December 2000 in Addis Ababa by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) on the theme of "AIDS — the Greatest Leadership Challenge". With a view to preparing the Government's contribution to the Forum, a national workshop bringing together all mechanisms involved in HIV/AIDS control was fully funded by United Nations system agencies, in particular by UNDP, UNICEF and WHO.

54. In a situation of civil war, particular attention must be accorded to human rights. In fact, the human rights situation on both sides of the firing line could not be more worrying. The United Nations system — led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights — has conducted human-rights protection, awareness-raising and training activities for local non-governmental organizations and human rights activists, including:

(a) Protection of vulnerable persons, of Tutsi origin or related, by a monitoring committee comprising, among others, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OCHA and ICRC. It has thus been possible to evacuate without hindrance nearly 2,000 persons to host countries;

(b) Inter-agency missions for the purposes of advocacy and support of various types have been effected in provinces under rebel control, including Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Kisangani. Visits have also been made to prisons in Goma, Bukavu and Bunia. In government-controlled territory, visits have been made to the Mbuji-Mayi prison, Kasaï-Oriental province and the Kinshasa Penitentiary and Re-education Centre. The most recent visit was held to coincide with the international week for poverty eradication. On this occasion, 9 tons of foodstuffs as well as medicines and books (contributed by agencies in the United Nations system) were made available to inmates;

(c) Support for the reuniting of families divided by armed conflict and for human rights monitoring in the provinces by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with the collaboration of MONUC;

(d) Collaboration between the Human Rights Section of MONUC and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, particularly in respect of support to government institutions and to civil society bodies through the following two seminars:

(i) Training seminar on human rights principles and protection mechanisms for 37 human rights activists in North and South Kivu provinces, Maniema and Orientale Province in August 2000;

(ii) Training seminar on the role of the lawyer in building a State based on the rule of law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo held in December 2000 and attended by 50 lawyers from government-controlled territories;

(e) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNHCR, MONUC and UNDP have supported activities to build the capacities of civil society in general and human rights NGOs. It was thus that the National Human Rights NGO Forum received support for establishing a national collaboration and consultation executive. Support was provided to NGO delegates and the Ministry for Human Rights to enable them to participate in the work of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights. A project for building the capacities of the Ministry for Human Rights was also prepared. Human rights NGOs from the town of Goma in North Kivu province were given support to organize a series of activities in the context of commemorations of the fifty-second anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(f) In December 2000, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNDP in North and South Kivu provinces organized a joint project to support local peace initiatives. Under the project, 36 people from 18 territories in targeted provinces were trained in methods of conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as in human rights mechanisms and principles.

55. Furthermore, the drastic downwards spiralling of official development assistance following the deterioration since the early 1990s of relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its main development partners was most regrettable. The conference of the main development partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo ("Friends of Congo" meeting) in Brussels in December 1997 which jointly with the Government considered implementation possibilities for the emergency programme to boost and stabilize the country's economy and for the resumption of structural cooperation did not keep its commitments in that regard. The onset of war in August 1998 provided a further pretext for delaying the anticipated recovery.

56. Some of the country's partners having expressed a desire to re-establish their cooperation programmes, the various sectoral programmes prepared with the financial and technical support of United Nations specialized agencies will serve as support documents for resource mobilization and/or dialogue meetings (consultative groups, round tables, sectoral and thematic consultations) as needed. For the time being, only the European Union and Belgium have officially confirmed their decision to unconditionally resume their structural cooperation with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

VIII. Humanitarian strategy of the United Nations

57. In the third year of the war, the humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo intensified throughout the country and was affecting an increasing proportion of the population. In 2000 one of the main features of the crisis was that the belligerents relentlessly targeted civilians in particular, systematically promoted an insecure environment and deliberately prevented humanitarian organizations from reaching populations increasingly destabilized by their chaotic environment.

58. Another aspect of the crisis was an acute awareness of the threat that the conflict now represented for regional stability. The conflict spilled over into a number of neighbouring countries, such as the Central African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, in the form of refugee flows, unchecked military activities and epidemics. Not only neighbouring countries were affected by these factors, however. The domestic effects were also far-reaching. Population

movements and the presence of great numbers of foreign and Congolese troops meant that the suffering spread even to areas hitherto spared by the conflict. Recently, the impact on the civilian population of a town repeatedly falling into the hands of the opposing forces was noted. The instances of the towns of Pepa and Pweto, where attacks triggered (both civilian and military) refugee flows into Zambia, demonstrates how fierce the fighting was and how terrified the population was of the consequences of such military operations.

59. In early 2001, Ituri once again provided the ultimate image of a lack or decline of political and administrative structures. Exploitation of the population's fears by unscrupulous leaders exacerbated ethnic antagonisms. The disorder and chaos that filled the vacuum at the State level partly explain the high number of fatalities (approximately 400) and highlight the current predicament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A. The consequences of the conflict

60. A horrifying number of people were affected by the conflict. In three years of war, 16 million persons, or 33 per cent of the population, were affected by the war. Early in 2001, a study conducted by the International Rescue Committee showed that approximately 1.7 million, including 600,000 children under 5 years of age, had died as a result of the war, solely in the eastern part of the country. Around 200,000 of these fatalities are attributable to the violence, whereas the rest are attributable to disease, malnutrition and the collapse of health systems. In towns, the food deficit has taken on alarming proportions. It amounts to 1 million tons and is a result of the disruption of traditional supply and trade channels. The consequent increased cost of basic foodstuffs in the context of a widespread drop in household purchasing power has added to the distress of the Congolese population, 70 per cent of whom have under $1 per day to live on.

61. Frequent movements have ruined the lives of millions of people. In North and South Kivu alone 49.5 per cent of this category of population is to be found. There is a total of 2 million displaced persons, the majority of whom are women and children who have been obliged to flee their homes and fields, leaving all their possessions behind them. Most of them have been taken in by families, where their presence exerts great pressure on already meagre resources. This situation is the outcome of a campaign of terror conducted by the military and the militias, which target defenceless civilians.

62. Some 300,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo have fled to neighbouring countries. Approximately 100,000 refugees who fled the fighting in Equateur province took refuge in the Republic of the Congo, and some 10,000 took refuge in the Central African Republic. In recent weeks, 5,000 persons have fled to Zambia from Katanga.

63. In some parts of the country, such as Equateur province, the level of dehumanization reached beggars belief: some 200,000 persons have taken refuge in the forests so as to maintain a modicum of dignity; they now have no clothing and dare not appear either at church or in a hospital and are unwilling to send their children to school; they are living in primitive conditions, and humanitarian assistance is not reaching them.

B. The constraints encountered

64. Paradoxically, although a growing number of people are falling victim to the war and need assistance, the humanitarian agencies have been deliberately prevented from reaching the victims and providing the assistance needed in order to save lives. This situation has been exacerbated by logistical difficulties, which have prevented assistance from reaching some cases. The obstacles in question have arisen both in government areas (administrative difficulties) and rebel areas (insecurity). In that connection, 30,000 displaced persons in South Equateur and 150,000 in North Katanga have gone without assistance in the course of the current year. Furthermore, as a result of the magnitude of the Congolese crisis, the humanitarian agencies have been short of financial resources. Only 61 per cent of the consolidated appeal for 2000, which was set at $71.4 million, was covered. Of the 16 million persons affected by the crisis, only 50 per cent received humanitarian assistance, and often only intermittently.

C. Humanitarian strategy of the United Nations

65. For the humanitarian community in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2000 was marked by a determined effort to reduce and mitigate the devastating effects of the war. Despite the enormous difficulties referred to, the results achieved were considerable. The year 2001 was marked by the determination to expand the humanitarian arena, which was facilitated by the decision of President Joseph Kabila to give humanitarian workers unimpeded access to the most vulnerable population groups. However, such an expansion was obstructed by such other factors as insecurity, the disastrous condition of infrastructure and the financial cost of assistance. With the extension of the humanitarian arena, new needs have been identified that cannot be met by increasing capacity on the ground and by means of a joint strategy on the part of all humanitarian agencies for the delivery of assistance.

66. The United Nations continued to endeavour to meet the crisis by ensuring an extensive presence throughout all 11 provinces. Considerable success was achieved through some kinds of intervention regarded as hallowed causes because intervention could take place on both sides of the front line, and they were the motive for a halt in the fighting in recognition of their universality and also as a token of respect for the action undertaken. It was in that spirit that the following operations were carried out by the agencies in the United Nations system:

(a) Through national immunization days it was possible to immunize over 10 million children under 5 years of age. The fact that it was possible to conduct the immunization campaign in a relatively satisfactory manner almost everywhere in the country is quite miraculous and indicative of the desire of parents and Congolese health professionals to cling to a certain universal normality;

(b) Approximately 28,000 students had their academic year validated, thanks to the delivery of examination papers to them and the subsequent channelling of their results from the provinces to Kinshasa;

(c) The distribution of seeds and agricultural implements meant that approximately 300,000 families could once again earn their livelihood;

(d) Emergency humanitarian interventions could be organized on both sides of the front line so as to come to the aid of the populations in question following the Kisangani fighting. OCHA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, with logistic support from MONUC, organized the biggest airlift ever put in place by the United Nations since the 1998 war. Through this operation Kisangani could be supplied with approximately 400 tons of medical equipment and foodstuffs. Through the rapid deployment of humanitarian personnel, it was possible to provide emergency assistance to the population of Kisangani and some 67,000 displaced persons. Four days after this operation began, 14 tons of machine oil had been transported to Kisangani to repair the generator there, which meant that the entire town could then be supplied with electric power;

(e) The principle of national solidarity could be implemented as a result of operations that could promote the unity of the Congolese nation and a concern for human priorities over and above the conflict. Epidemiologists could thus be transferred to Durba and Watsa for the purpose of identifying the haemorrhagic fever virus and combating it. Protective materials were put in place at the main health centres;

(f) In the framework of preparations for the national immunization days, a joint mission to Gemena and Gbadolite was conducted with WHO and UNICEF representatives. On that occasion, vaccines were distributed and negotiations taken up with the MLC authorities to ensure respect for the "days of tranquillity". Medical kits and medicines were put in place at most health centres in the two locations;

(g) MONUC, international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies and programmes are actively involved in efforts to ensure resumption of river navigation for both humanitarian and trade purposes, the latter in order to promote trade and commercial flows between deficit and surplus areas. In that connection, the departure of humanitarian barges should make possible an exchange of essential articles across the front line and subsequently facilitate the process of setting up confidence-building machinery and mechanisms for promoting access with a view to expanding the humanitarian arena;

(h) The humanitarian component of MONUC, in close cooperation with the new MONUC disarmament, demobilization, reintegration,

resettlement and repatriation unit, is engaged in preparing a programme for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, resettlement and repatriation of child soldiers. At the same time, the agencies in the United Nations system are considering the matter in a broader context so as to include other elements relating to the demobilization, social and economic reintegration and resettlement of former combatants;

(i) Humanitarian coordination by means of information processing and the formulation of joint strategies based on the areas of competence of each humanitarian agency and the joint conduct of missions and studies has been strengthened, which has led to a greater understanding of the human situation and the identification of appropriate strategies.

67. Mobilization of resources is an obstacle to the implementation of the strategy. The consolidated appeal for 2001 amounts to $139.5 million, a sum that falls far short of requirements, in view of the extent of the human distress involved. The appeal is based on a new strategy targeting various levels of intervention, ranging from food security for households and more extensive programmes of intervention in the area of health. The chief objective is to save as many lives as possible, to support community strategies for surviving and adjusting to the crisis and to promote the circulation of goods and individuals. One of the aims of the appeal is to identify the various layers of vulnerability so as to facilitate more targeted interventions on the part of the humanitarian community. Lastly, within the framework of the appeal, seeking solutions that go beyond humanitarian assistance *stricto sensu* is encouraged. In view of the enormous agricultural potential of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, initiatives designed to support trade on both sides of the front line or to help surplus regions supply deficit areas will be encouraged by developing traffic and trade on the Congo River and ensuring security in that connection.

68. Now more than ever, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is undergoing a severe and complex crisis that is a component of a regional scenario. The population is exhausted after three years of war. Chronic insecurity, the decline of health structures, food shortages and the economic crisis have worn down the remaining will to survive. Shortcomings in terms of governance, an area in which the Congolese have always found creative ways of surviving, have become an insurmountable obstacle that has broken their will and destroyed their faith in the future. However, recent political changes and the determination of the new Congolese Government to restore peace opens up new prospects for the humanitarian agencies. These prospects should be based on the process of setting up working groups in the various areas of the country to identify a common strategy for intervention with a view to providing a coordinated response and meeting the needs identified more effectively. The current context will thus enable the humanitarian agencies to deal with a whole series of more specific problems that are of vital importance for the reconstruction of the country; this will be achieved by setting up special programmes for such purposes as demobilizing and reintegrating child soldiers or resettling displaced persons and refugees. Needless to say, the corollary of humanitarian expansion is greater involvement on the part of donors in providing financial resources but also a more coordinated approach.

IX. Prospects for reconstruction

69. Last year, the report submitted to the General Assembly stressed that the current crisis should not obscure the opportunities for change available to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This warning is even more apt now that hope has been generated by the desire of the Congolese to reach agreement on the collective administration of their country. If it does in fact take place, the opening-up advocated by the new authorities at both the political and economic levels, and with respect to human rights, offers a real opportunity to end the crisis.

70. The determination of the United Nations to ensure the rapid departure of the foreign armed forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is also a great source of hope for the return to a lasting peace. To overcome the impending crisis, substantial assistance from the international community is essential for the country's reconstruction endeavour, in keeping with the priority themes outlined in the previous report (A/55/319), which must still be taken into account. Once again, they were as follows:

Theme 1: Peace, security and reconciliation

71. It is recognized that the introduction of a framework of peace and reconciliation is a sine qua

non for the creation of an environment conducive to the rehabilitation and recovery of the human development process. The activities to be undertaken in this area must necessarily reflect the political decision makers' will to strengthen the peace process. This dynamic should be supported by the provision of the appropriate material and technical resources to the various bodies established to maintain this process.

Theme 2: Preparing a strategy to end the crisis

72. The process for ending the crisis on which the Congolese Government appears to have embarked is the approach recommended to it by the Bretton Woods institutions, consisting of the following stages:

(a) Implementation for one year of an interim programme monitored by IMF with as performance criteria macroeconomic stabilization and payment of arrears vis-à-vis IMF (possibly by means of a bridge loan);

(b) Preparation under the interim programme of a strategic framework for poverty alleviation by means of a national concerted effort supported by the development partners;

(c) Implementation of a three-year programme based on the strategic framework for poverty alleviation and supported by the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, and possibly also by debt forgiveness under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative.

73. The ongoing discussions between the Congolese Government and the Bretton Woods institutions indicate that the launching of the first stage is already being seriously hindered by external financing difficulties, given the wait-and-see attitude being maintained by most donors and other sources of financing. The country must therefore as a matter of priority be given assistance in mobilizing resources by means of many-pronged strategies ranging from diplomatic action to improve its image, and action to promote peace and good governance, to quality sectoral and macroeconomic programmes.

74. A coordinated approach is required in order to achieve this, at least at the level of the United Nations system. Synergy and complementarity of the action taken by the various agencies will be decisive in mobilizing sufficient funds both to meet the challenges represented by the problems of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to seize the opportunities offered by the new political, economic and military situation. The strategy for ending the crisis itself must combine humanitarian action and intervention for the purpose of rehabilitation and development. Emphasis must be placed on action to strengthen grass-roots communities so as to enable them to develop and implement their own projects for ending the crisis, particularly in the following priority areas: resettlement of displaced persons, demobilization and integration of ex-combatants, HIV/AIDS control and rehabilitation of basic social infrastructure (such as schools, hospitals and minor roads). Such measures must be combined with more traditional, medium-term intervention in the framework of a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy. The United Nations system can already be called on to prepare the various components (statistics, databases and a participatory process) needed in order to develop the strategy. The Congolese Government can thus be helped to devise its own framework for intervention and for the coordination of all donors and other sources of financing.

United Nations A/56/270

General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 August 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Item 33 of the provisional agenda*
Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

Note by the Secretary-General**

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991. A mechanism for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Agenda is contained in section II, paragraphs 42 to 48, of the annex to the resolution. In its resolution 51/32 on the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda, the Assembly decided to conduct the final review and appraisal of the programme in 2002.

2. In its resolution 54/234 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the General Assembly also decided to consider at its fifty-sixth session the modalities for undertaking the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda, taking into account the mid-term review and agreed conclusions 1999/2 of the Economic and Social Council. The Assembly reaffirmed this decision in its resolution 55/216.

3. The final review and appraisal of the New Agenda is an occasion for the General Assembly and the international community to take stock of efforts made by the African countries themselves and the international community at large to foster the development of the continent. It is also an opportunity for the Assembly to deliberate and provide guidelines on future actions and approaches to ensure effective coordination of poverty eradication and sustainable development efforts in Africa.

II. Evaluation of the New Agenda

4. In its 1999/2 agreed conclusions, the Economic and Social Council requested that the Secretary-General commission an independent evaluation of the New Agenda, including its relationship with other initiatives. The Council called for the evaluation to show clearly achievements and shortcomings in overall performance, particularly in regard to identified priority areas and in meeting agreed targets. It also requested that the evaluation make recommendations for future action, including consideration of successor arrangements. In its resolution 54/234, the General Assembly stressed the paramount importance for the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda of an

* A/56/150.

** The footnote requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

01-50430 (E) 060901

independent evaluation that should include a thorough review of existing initiatives on Africa. In its resolution 55/216, the Assembly requested that the independent evaluation of the New Agenda, which should be submitted to it by 31 May 2002, also take into account section VII of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see General Assembly resolution 55/2).

5. At its forty-sixth session, in June 2001, the Committee for Programme and Coordination requested that the various reports related to the final evaluation of the New Agenda should, inter alia present an assessment of all the activities carried out by all partners concerned in the various areas covered by the New Agenda and identify successes, obstacles, failures and lessons learned. The impact and implications of the activities on the development of Africa in the light of the commitments, responsibilities and objectives initially set by the New Agenda should be indicated as well. The Committee also requested that concrete proposals on the successor arrangements to the New Agenda be put forward. Such proposals should include effective coordination measures at the international, regional, subregional and national levels.[1]

6. The independent and high-level quality evaluation of the New Agenda and related initiatives, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/217, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, has been launched. The Secretary-General has established a panel composed of 12 independent personalities from Africa and the international community to oversee this evaluation. The panel is scheduled to hold its first meeting in September 2001 to review the terms of reference and to agree on the calendar and process of the evaluation, which will be undertaken by a team of four independent experts under its supervision. The panel will also meet in March 2002 to discuss the draft evaluation report before it is finalized and submitted to the Assembly by 31 May 2002.

III. Final review and appraisal of the New Agenda by the General Assembly

7. It may be recalled that in 1984 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) issued a declaration on the critical economic situation in Africa that led to the convening of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly, which adopted the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. That programme was based on Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, which was derived from the Lagos Plan of Action (A/S-11/14, annex I). Subsequently, the New Agenda was developed on the basis of a memorandum (A/46/280, annex) prepared by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa and submitted to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

8. The recent initiatives taken by African countries to assume and assert ownership of their development, together with their attempt to redefine the terms and conditions of partnership with the international community, led to the adoption of the New African Initiative in July 2001 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU. In the declaration it adopted on 18 July 2001 during the high-level segment of its session of 2001, the Economic and Social Council called on the United Nations system and the international community to support the New African Initiative and invited the Secretary-General to take the requisite measures to ensure the effective and coordinated response of the United Nations system to the Initiative.

9. In the statement he made at the opening of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on 16 July 2001, the Secretary-General said the United Nations would fully support the New African Initiative and expressed the need to put an end to the multiplicity of initiatives on Africa. This is in line with the long and well-established policy of the United Nations to support African initiatives.

10. In the statement delivered on 17 July 2001 on behalf of the African Group of States during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, it was stressed that the review of the implementation of the New Agenda would provide the international community with the opportunity to assess the performance of African countries and the international support provided to them during the past decade in a comprehensive manner. It would be the occasion where the future course of action for implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including reducing poverty by half by the year 2015 in Africa, could be determined. Furthermore, it was stated that the final review and appraisal would be a comprehensive

undertaking which would determine the future course of action of the international community with regard to African development and, in that context, help to determine the role of the United Nations system in support of Africa.

11. The General Assembly may wish to consider adopting the same modality applied for the mid-term review of the New Agenda and used in the past to carry out the mid-term and the final reviews and appraisals of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, the predecessor programme to the New Agenda, which involved the establishment by the Assembly of an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. At its fifty-sixth session, the Assembly may thus wish to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole to carry out the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda and submit its report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session for its decision.

12. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole could hold an organizational session in early June 2002 and a substantive session in September 2002 shortly before the close of the fifty-sixth session. The documents which could assist the General Assembly in the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda could include the report on the independent evaluation to be submitted by 31 May 2002, a note by the Secretary-General providing any views he may have on the evaluation report and reports on or assessments of the implementation of the New Agenda by OAU or its successor, the African Union, and the community of non-governmental organizations.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/56/16), para. 140.

United Nations A/56/271

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 August 2001

Original: English

Fifty-sixth session
Item 131 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Human rights questions: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights

Note by the Secretary-General**

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights, submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/94 of 4 December 2000.

* A/56/150.

** In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/222, part III, paragraph 10, the present report is being submitted on 7 August 2001 so as to include as much updated information as possible.

01-50149 (E) 100901

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004, and public information activities in the field of human rights

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I. Introduction

1. At the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights presented the report on the mid-term global evaluation of the progress made towards the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) which was carried out between April and August 2000 (A/55/360). The report included an analysis of national and international initiatives undertaken within the first five years of the Decade and a set of recommendations for future action addressed to the national, regional and international levels.

2. In its resolution 55/94 of 4 December 2001, the General Assembly requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to bring those recommendations to the attention of Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the progress made towards the achievement of the objectives of the Decade.

3. Accordingly, the present report includes communications received from those actors and other information on human rights education and public information activities undertaken by the Office of the High Commissioner between December 2000 and mid-July 2001. Section II refers specifically to the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Decade, and Section III to other public information activities in the field of human rights undertaken by the Office.

II. Implementation of the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

4. This section follows the structure of the Plan of Action, highlighting the advancements in the implementation of some of its components.

A. Component one: assessing needs and formulating strategies for human rights education

5. The mid-term evaluation of the Decade (see A/55/360), which has been a complex and participatory process, highlighted human rights education needs, accomplishments and obstacles, as expressed by the many actors involved, and recommendations for the remainder of the Decade.

B. Components two and three: strengthening international and regional programmes and capacities for human rights education

1. United Nations system

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

6. In line with the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation and with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights, the contribution of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to the Decade's objectives has focused on the following courses of action:

Ensuring basic worldwide coordination for the Decade

7. The Office has continued to disseminate information on the Decade and on human rights education in general by answering related inquiries from interested representatives of Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and others. Notes verbales were addressed in May 2001 to all Governments, as were letters to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, drawing their attention to General Assembly resolution 55/94 and soliciting information on their contribution to its implementation. A page of the OHCHR web site specifically related to the Decade is periodically updated in order to disseminate related information.

Facilitating networking and information-sharing among the Decade's actors

8. Two major contributions of the Office in this regard are the new OHCHR Database on Human Rights Education and the OHCHR Resource Collection on Human Rights Education, which were launched on Human Rights Day 2000.

9. The Database on Human Rights Education is one of the outcomes of the mid-term evaluation of the Decade. Within this context, in the year 2000, OHCHR

launched a global survey, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on organizations, materials and programmes for human rights education developed and active since the beginning of the Decade. The survey was undertaken through the dissemination of targeted questionnaires addressed to Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, national institutions, human rights institutes, universities and others. At the same time, a database for hosting information received in reply to those questionnaires was designed and has been gradually updated in order to reflect all information received. In the future, other relevant data shared with OHCHR will be included in the database, which will be regularly updated.

10. The database is accessible through the OHCHR web site (http://www.unhchr.ch/hredu.nsf) and is structured into the following five interlinked sections: General (which shows all database documents together); Institution (name, address, contact person, type, etc.); Programme (type, description, target audience, etc.); Material (bibliographic and substantive information); and Scholarship (funding organization, admission requirements, etc.). The five sections can be searched by geographical focus, target groups, substantive focus, country/region, type and language. The information contained in the database is accessible in three United Nations languages (English, French and Spanish).

11. The OHCHR *Resource Collection on Human Rights Education*, which includes a variety of specialized human rights education and training materials, is a thematic collection and forms a part of the future OHCHR library. Since the inception of the Decade, OHCHR has collected more than 1,000 items, including monographs, curricula, children's books, reports, research papers, workshop/seminar reports, multimedia, training and reference materials. In addition, as a result of the mid-term evaluation, OHCHR has received a large amount of related materials from various partners. Those materials are now accessible to human rights educators and other interested visitors in the Resource Collection Room, which is located on the ground floor of the OHCHR headquarters in Geneva, and supervised by a specialized documentalist.

12. In addition, OHCHR has organized regional activities, among them, the Subregional Workshop on Human Rights Education in Central Africa (March 2001), which gathered representatives of Governments, national institutions, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations from the subregion. The workshop, which was the first activity of the United Nations Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, adopted recommendations for national, subregional and international action, and agreed on a priority programme for the Subregional Centre, which focuses on human rights education and public information activities. A regional conference on human rights education in Latin America and the Caribbean is currently being jointly organized with UNESCO, and will be held in Mexico City in November and December 2001.

13. The Office also cooperated with UNESCO in the organization of the latter's Annual Meeting of Directors of Human Rights Institutes, which was held in Paris from 22 to 24 January 2001, and was attended by representatives of about 50 human rights institutes and UNESCO Chairs from all over the world. The meeting focused on the following areas: human rights and the struggle against poverty; preparations for the forthcoming World Conference against Racism; follow-up to the mid-term evaluation of the Decade, and strengthening of cooperation among the various institutes.

14. In February 2001, OHCHR published a Compendium of national plans of action for human rights education (unedited version), to facilitate information-sharing and assist States in the development of national plans of action for human rights education. The Compendium is composed of an introduction, which provides background information on the development of national plans of action for human rights education; the texts of existing national plans of action for human rights education, including relevant sections of overall national human rights plans; and various annexes, including relevant United Nations documents.

15. The Office has substantively participated in and, in some cases, financially supported, training and educational activities organized by various institutions and organizations at the international level (for instance, by the International Institute for Human Rights/France and the Canadian Human Rights Foundation) and at the regional level (for instance, by the Arab Institute for Human Rights Studies/Egypt in

the Arab region and by the Asian Regional Resource Centre for Human Rights Education/Thailand). Finally, OHCHR has continued to assist and support human rights education programmes by all actors through the provision, free of charge, of its publications (see sect. III.A below).

Supporting national capacities for human rights education

16. OHCHR has continued its technical cooperation activities aimed at strengthening national capacities in the field of human rights, including human rights education and public information. Details of these activities are provided in the report of the Secretary-General on advisory services and technical cooperation in the field of human rights to the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/2001/104).

Assisting grass-roots human rights education initiatives

17. As indicated in previous reports (see, in particular, A/54/399), the Assisting Communities Together project was initiated in 1998, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to assist organizations and individuals at the local level in carrying out activities aimed at strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights in local communities. In 1998, 69 individual grants, totalling approximately US$ 130,000, were awarded to human rights initiatives in 24 countries. Thanks to additional contributions received in 1999 from the United Nations Foundation for International Partnerships, a second phase of the project was launched in November 1999, and supported 97 human rights education projects in 16 countries. Given the encouraging feedback from civil society and from United Nations partners in the field, and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/94, a third phase of the project will be launched by September 2001, as a component of the global OHCHR programme for the Decade.

Developing a selected number of human rights training materials

See section II.D below.

Globally disseminating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

See section II.E below.

United Nations Environment Programme

18. One of the core functions of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the promotion of greater awareness of the international environment agenda and the facilitation of cooperation among all sectors of society and actors involved in its implementation. The Programme's outreach to the public has taken place through the Internet (see www.unep.org, the portal www.UNEP.Net and the online bookshop www.earthprint.com), television spots and photographic competitions. In addition, UNEP has been supporting the development of national expertise in the field of environmental policy and law through training and public information programmes, including the development of materials targeting young audiences, trainers and managers. One interesting experience is the Regional Environmental Action Learning Programme, launched in 1999 by UNEP in collaboration with UNESCO and another partner. It includes curricular and extra-curricular environmental education activities related to the needs of participating schools and surrounding communities. It is action-oriented; it aims at bringing about change to the environmental conditions at the local level and refers to basic human rights, such as the right to education, shelter, health, nutrition and sustained natural resources. Finally, in cooperation with OHCHR, UNEP is organizing a seminar on environment and human rights to discuss interlinkages, common protection approaches, the special role played by some groups and their vulnerability, and proposals for future courses of action at the national and international level.

United Nations University

19. Within its Peace and Governance Programme, the United Nations University (UNU) is engaged in mainstreaming a human rights approach into its various activities, in particular within its research projects, both in terms of topics covered and expertise used. Current research projects have focused on obstacles to the implementation of human rights, and have highlighted the human rights aspects of broad processes, such as conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building. In addition, the University hosts an annual International Course, which welcomes

participants from all over the world selected from a wide array of professionals, activists and researchers. Such course has a human rights component, which includes an overview of the various human rights mechanisms currently in force under international law and of the various actors involved in human rights promotion and protection. The University is ideally positioned to further contribute to the Decade through research and through its increasingly broad-ranged dissemination activities.

2. Non-governmental organizations

20. Several international non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council have informed OHCHR of their contribution to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 55/94, as follows.

21. The Association of World Citizens pointed out that development issues should be a focus area of human rights education, for development is one of the main goals of governmental policies. Schools, as a part of governmental structures, should play an active role in educating children to development questions. Methodologically, teachers could approach this goal by making students reflect on their own life experiences and move from there to the social and economic chain of events behind those experiences. For instance, food habits and the right to food could be the starting points for discussions and research projects about trade, distribution of income, employment conditions, etc.

22. ATD Fourth World mentioned that human rights education should include information on remedial procedures accessible to citizens in cases of human rights violations. Extreme poverty should be regarded as one of those violations, and should therefore be the subject of human rights education programmes. Within those programmes, attention should not only be drawn to interaction between young people from different ethnic origins, but also from different social backgrounds; human rights education activities should be intensified for social workers' trainers and for poor populations which are especially vulnerable. Human rights education research should be intensified; it should be based on real cases and on the experiences and thoughts of victims of human rights violations.

23. France Libertés has financially supported various human rights education activities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and in particular local projects focusing on the rights to education, health, economic development and on the culture of peace, democracy and non-violence. Such projects have included people's sensitization campaigns on indigenous people issues in Chile; training sessions for school teachers and representatives of social groups in Chile; the establishment of a centre in Mexico where human rights violations can be reported and which provides legal assistance to vulnerable groups, such as rural populations, street children, prisoners and people living with HIV/AIDS. France Libertés has also been advocating against the death penalty; a CD-ROM against racism was also produced and distributed among schools and for public awareness purposes.

24. The International Publishers Association supports the objectives of the Decade and expressed the need to raise awareness, in particular on the right to freedom of expression and intellectual property rights and their violation.

25. The People's Movement for Human Rights Education has developed demand-driven human rights education programmes focusing on the enhancement of, inter alia, human rights monitoring, gender equality, poverty alleviation and equal participation of the citizens in decision-making processes. The Movement has been promoting the development of human rights cities (in Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, India, Mali, the Philippines and Senegal). Related educational programmes have included an analysis of traditional beliefs, collective memory and aspirations related to the contents of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The People's Movement for Human Rights Education has also been promoting the development of regional learning institutions for human rights education in various regions, responsible for creating a pool of community-based human rights educators. Various training-of-trainers sessions on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women have been carried out. The Movement has also published various training materials, including a training package on the Convention, and human rights resource packets for non-governmental organizations. Finally, the People's Movement for Human Rights Education suggested that United Nations Member States should develop political leadership for human rights learning at all levels; United Nations agencies should integrate holistic human rights education in their projects and

programmes; and the media should be more involved in human rights public awareness.

26. The Romanian Independent Society of Human Rights affirmed that Governments' commitments to the Decade could be measured by assessing the budget they allocate to human rights education. While it is true that non-governmental organizations have a key role in achieving the objectives of the Decade, formal education (such as curriculum development) is a major governmental responsibility, and therefore Governments have an essential duty to fulfil in this context. International organizations should monitor Governments' compliance with their commitments and should disseminate information on various experiences, including materials and programmes, through a publicly available database. The Society finally affirmed that the ultimate goal of any educational effort, that is, to put human rights into practice, should guide educational work to be done within and after the Decade.

27. Susila Dharma International reported that, in 1997, one of its members, Mithra Foundation started human rights education programmes in Bangalore schools, based on human rights values as contained in the Indian Constitution and international instruments. Activities included school programmes, training of teachers, material development (in particular, a textbook in the Kannada language), establishment of partnerships with community organizations working in social development, etc. Main targets were marginalized social groups such as women, children, dalits, refugees and minority members, and the methodology used varied from formal school teaching to the use of stories, homework, artwork, debates, and role playing.

28. The World Organization Against Torture conducted various activities related to education against torture. Firstly, it organized or participated in training courses for military and police officers, such as training sessions for European police officers (which served as a basis for the development of training manuals), a seminar in Geneva for the Colombian army and police training courses in Colombia. Secondly, it supported human rights defenders with technical and substantive assistance. One example was Nigeria, where it also promoted the development of a national network on human rights issues. The World Organization Against Torture developed a partnership programme with human rights defenders, who have the possibility to learn about international mechanisms by doing internships within the organization's secretariat in Geneva; in exchange, the organization is enriched by the experience of local human rights activists.

C. Components four and five: strengthening national and local programmes and capacities for human rights education

29. The Plan of Action for the Decade provides for the establishment, upon the initiative of Governments or other relevant institutions, of national focal points or committees for human rights education, which should include a broad coalition of governmental and non-governmental actors and be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive, effective and sustainable national plan of action for human rights education. When applicable, this plan should constitute an integral part of the national development plan and be complementary to other relevant national plans of action already defined (overall human rights plans or those relating to women, children, minorities, indigenous peoples, etc.). Related guidelines (A/52/469/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1) were sent by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Director-General of UNESCO to all Heads of Government in September 1998.

30. Within the process of the mid-term evaluation of the Decade, more than 60 Governments have informed OHCHR of their related activities carried out in the first five years of the Decade. Further information forwarded to OHCHR between December 2000 and mid-July 2001 follows.

(a) **Argentina.** Since 1995, the Government has incorporated human rights in the school curricula, as part of ethics and citizenship education. The issues dealt with include: respect and the dignity of the person; respect for differences; discrimination as a violation of human rights; and peace and international human rights documents. Democracy, rule of law and justice, as well as individual responsibility in the promotion and the protection of human rights, are also included, and analysis of concrete cases and current events is envisaged. In 1997/98, the Federal Council of Education has also included human rights as a compulsory topic in the training of all teachers.

(b) **Austria.** The Government highlighted various recent initiatives undertaken at all levels. At the local level, in February 2001, the Municipal Council of Graz proclaimed the city of Graz a human rights city, with the aim of mainstreaming human rights into all activities and decision-making processes of the city's administration, including through the organization of human rights training for local government officials. In addition, the Graz European Research and Training Centre for Human Rights and Democracy develops and implements human rights training worldwide. At the national level, the Service Centre for Human Rights Education, established in 1997, continues to provide systematic assistance and advice to school teachers on human rights issues, including the development of special projects and of a newsletter. Anti-racism educational efforts were also reported. At the international level, the Government promoted human rights education in the framework of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, the Human Security Network and bilateral development cooperation projects.

(c) **Republic of Belarus.** In 1999, the Council of Ministers adopted the National Plan for Human Rights Education, covering the period 1999-2004. The Plan focuses on the school system and has six components: public information, including the dissemination of main United Nations and UNESCO instruments and relevant national legislation; the inclusion of human rights in the school curricula, as part of the subjects "Man and the world", "Man, society and the state" and "Fundamentals of the law of the Republic of Belarus", and the development of human rights courses at the higher education level; the organization of other educational activities, such as competitions, exhibition, film festivals, tours, etc.; the development of relevant school textbooks and teaching materials, and the carrying out of related research at the National Education Institute, the Republican Institute for Higher Schools, the Belarusian State Pedagogical University and a number of regional universities; the training of teachers, facilitated by international symposia and national seminars, training courses and conferences; and cooperation with other countries and international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Children's Fund.

(d) **Czech Republic.** The Government Human Rights Council, established in 1998 by the Government to monitor domestic compliance with fundamental human rights standards and comprising governmental representatives, as well as representatives of civil society, created in 1999 an expert Working Group for Human Rights Education. The Working Group was tasked to act as a focal point for the purposes of the Decade and had a significant part in drafting a comprehensive report on human rights education in the Czech Republic commissioned by the Government in 2000. The report builds on material submitted by the Ministries of Education, Justice, Finance, Labour and Social Affairs, Interior, Defence, Culture and Foreign Affairs; the Working Group also included information received from specialized educational establishments, institutes of higher education, professional organizations and non-governmental organizations. It focused on human rights educational efforts in schools and higher education establishments, and on the human rights training of teachers, employees of the Ministry of Finance, the police, and the Army, prison officials, social workers and health professionals.

(e) **Japan.** The Government reported a series of measures and activities undertaken in the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Human Rights Education (1997) in various fields (schools, professional groups, etc.), for specific sectors of the population (Buraku people, the Ainu people, persons with disabilities, the aged, etc.) and internationally. The Government also reported on the efforts being undertaken by local governments: 35 Japanese prefectures have established local task forces to pursue the Decade's objectives, and 26 have developed a local plan for human rights education. Municipal governments are also taking similar action.

D. Component six: coordinated development of materials for human rights education

31. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is making available information about human rights education and training materials developed under the Decade through its Database on Human Rights Education (see sect. II.B.1 above).

32. As far as the OHCHR contribution to this component is concerned, work has continued on six human rights training packages for human rights monitors, judges and lawyers, prison officials, primary

and secondary school teachers, peacekeepers and national and local non-governmental organizations. In the development of these materials, OHCHR works in close cooperation with relevant experts and organizations. The most advanced materials are the manual for human rights monitors, which is in print, and the training package for prison officials, which is being disseminated in a pilot version and will be sent to print by the end of 2001. More information on other OHCHR publications is provided in section III.A below.

E. Component eight: global dissemination of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

33. On 10 December 1998, OHCHR launched a section on its web site which comprises the texts of more than 250 national and local language versions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The database can be accessed at http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/index.htm. Thanks to this project, in November 1999, the OHCHR was awarded the Guinness World Record for having collected, translated and disseminated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into more than 300 languages and dialects, thus making it the most translated document — indeed, the most universal — in the world.

34. During the reporting period, OHCHR has continued to facilitate the development of new versions in indigenous and minority languages and has maintained the database, including through the revision of the existing versions. As of July 2001, 324 versions of the Declaration are available on the database.

35. In addition, on Human Rights Day 2000, OHCHR opened to the public its Universal Declaration of Human Rights Collection, which includes various types of material on the Universal Declaration developed by governmental and non-governmental organizations both on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration (1998) and prior to/after the anniversary year. The Collection is unique in the world and comprises more than 400 items, including printed material (such as books for children, books in Braille, newsletters, calendars, articles, photographs, posters, etc.), multimedia materials (including audio cassette recordings in various national and local languages, CD-ROMs, videotapes and documentaries on the Declaration) and souvenir items (bookmarks, key chains, magnets, stamps, pins, etc.). A selection of the Collection is permanently displayed on the ground floor at OHCHR headquarters in Geneva.

III. Other public information activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

36. The present section supplements information provided in the last Secretary-General's report to the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/2001/92).

A. Publications programme

37. In response to the need to strengthen its publications programme, OHCHR commissioned an external review, which was carried out by an independent consultant in June and July 2000. The consultant's recommendations provided the basis for the formulation of a new publications programme, the implementation of which will depend upon the availability of funding. The new programme would focus on publications in five core categories, namely: fact sheets; reference materials; training and education materials; special issue papers; and promotional materials. Special attention would be given to improved quality and multilingual dissemination. Initiatives in publications and the web site would be developed and managed in parallel as part of a comprehensive public information strategy.

38. According to a rough estimate, during the reporting period, the Office has distributed more than 40,000 copies of human rights publications, in addition to the 5,000 copies of each publication which are regularly distributed by the Distribution Section at the United Nations Office at Geneva through the mailing list established jointly by the Distribution Section and OHCHR. OHCHR has also increased the electronic dissemination of its publications. The publications section of the OHCHR web site is being developed and, in August 2000, OHCHR received authorization to reproduce its sales items on its web site.

39. **Fact sheets**. The Fact Sheet Series consists of booklets directed at a non-specialized audience,

addressing various aspects of United Nations activities in the field of human rights. In the reporting period, Fact Sheet No. 27, *Seventeen Frequently-Asked Questions about United Nations Special Rapporteurs*, was published. The next five numbers in the Series are in an advanced stage of preparation: Fact Sheet No. 28, *The Impact of Mercenary Activity on the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination*; No. 29 *Trust Funds*; No. 30, *Human Rights Defenders*; No. 31, *Right to Development* and No. 32, *Freedom from Poverty*. A number of outdated fact sheets are currently under revision. Finally, OHCHR has made available all the fact sheets on its web site, thereby enhancing their dissemination and contributing to a reduction in print runs and a rationalization of expenses.

40. **Reference materials**. The OHCHR reference publications are directed at a more specialized audience. In this regard, a revision of *Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments, vol. I, Universal Instruments* is currently under preparation and a Russian translation of *Human Rights: A Compilation of International Instruments, vol. II, Regional Instruments* is under way.

41. **Training and educational materials**. The Professional Training Series is designed primarily to provide support to the training activities of the OHCHR Programme of Advisory Services and Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights, as well as to assist other organizations involved in human rights education for professional groups.

42. During the period under review, two items of the Series have been published in English: No. 7, *Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring* and No. 8, *The Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*. This second manual has also been made available in electronic format on the Internet. Other training materials are under preparation (see sect. II.D above).

43. In the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, a revision of *ABC — Teaching Human Rights: Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools* is in an advanced stage of preparation.

44. Two specialized guides on relevant parts of the United Nations system for minorities and indigenous peoples are under preparation: *The United Nations Guide for Minorities* and *The United Nations Guide for Indigenous Peoples*.

45. **Special issue papers**. No items have yet been published in this core category. New publications are pending on the implementation of the new OHCHR publications programme.

46. **Promotional materials**. OHCHR, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, has prepared flyers and brochures on the World Conference against Racism (see sect. III.D below).

47. **Media liaison**. The Office has continued to strengthen its capacity to communicate the human rights message. OHCHR staff responsible for media liaison briefs the international press regularly on the activities of the Office and on the human rights programme in general. Among other duties, the media liaison staff is also responsible for drafting press statements on behalf of the Office or the High Commissioner; organizing interviews and media appearances by the High Commissioner; assisting the special procedures mechanisms and the treaty bodies with their media liaison needs; the drafting and placing opinion pieces and other articles in major international publications.

B. Use of electronic means

48. During the reporting period, a fifth substantive database, the Database on Human Rights Education (see sect. II.B.1 above), was added to the existing Databases on Charter-based Bodies, treaty bodies, press releases and statements. The last four host approximately 30,000 records and full-text documents which are available for public access through the OHCHR web site (www.unhchr.ch).

49. The live audio broadcast of human rights events has expanded to include not only the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights but also those of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. The audio files are made available in different languages and are archived for research purposes. Live coverage on the Internet also includes daily text updates.

50. Given the fact that a clear information structure and professional designs are key to a user-friendly web site, OHCHR has also created and redesigned several

pages within its web site, such as those on women's rights, the World Conference against Racism and the Commission on Human Rights.

C. External relations programme

51. **Briefings**. OHCHR regularly organizes briefings for students, diplomats, journalists, public officials, academics, professors and non-governmental organizations. It also provides lecturers for briefings organized by the Department of Public Information. A total of 53 such briefings were delivered by OHCHR officers since the last report to the Commission on Human Rights.

52. **Exhibitions and human rights observances**. In the reporting period, OHCHR organized two exhibits. For the occasion of the forthcoming World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, the exhibit entitled "Amandla Awethu: African-Americans and African Solidarity", already displayed in 1999, was reproposed from 2 April to 7 May 2001 at Palais Wilson. Devoted to an important chapter in the history of human rights, the exhibit celebrated the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The exhibit "Cerny Inuit Collection", consisting of circumpolar art works, was displayed at Palais Wilson from 23 July to 14 August 2001, during the meeting of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples. In addition, on the occasion of the International Day for the Eradication of Extreme Poverty (17 October 2000), OHCHR, in collaboration with the International Movement ATD Fourth World, organized a commemoration entitled "I reject poverty, I work for peace".

53. Human Rights Day, which was commemorated at OHCHR headquarters on 11 December 2000, had as its main theme: "Human rights education: a contribution to a culture of peace". The morning was devoted to a forum on the culture of peace and, in the afternoon, the High Commissioner for Human Rights convened a panel of relevant United Nations agencies to share successful examples of human rights education programmes undertaken or sponsored during the first half of the Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004). On the same occasion, OHCHR opened its Resource Collection on Human Rights Education and launched its Database on Human Rights Education (see sect. II.B.1 above).

54. **Fellowship programme**. The objective of the human rights fellowship programme (established through General Assembly resolution 926 (X) of 14 December 1955) is to enhance knowledge of human rights standards and mechanisms. In past years, it has focused on the periodic reporting system established within the context of the major United Nations human rights treaties. OHCHR offers fellowships to governmental and non-governmental officials and representatives. For the year 2001, the programme is envisaged for November.

55. **Internship programme**. During the reporting period, OHCHR offered internships to more than 100 graduate students to enable them to gain first-hand knowledge of United Nations activities in the field of human rights. Internships are awarded without financial commitment of any kind on the part of OHCHR or the United Nations bodies.

D. World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance

56. In its resolution 52/111 of 12 December 1997, the General Assembly decided to convene a World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, of which the High Commissioner is Secretary-General.

57. **Printed materials**. The logo for the World Conference, presented by the Government of South Africa to OHCHR, was approved by the United Nations Publications Board in February 2001. It was launched by the High Commissioner for Human Rights at a briefing on 23 February 2001, to appear on all World Conference-related publications and information material.

58. The Office published three issues of a newsletter entitled *United against Racism, Durban 2001*, to report on the preparations for the World Conference. The newsletter is published in English, French and Spanish and has been sent to all permanent missions, United Nations Development Programme resident representatives and resident coordinators, United Nations bodies and programmes, national institutions, accredited non-governmental organizations and key media sources. The Secretariat is planning to publish more issues as part of the build-up to the World Conference.

59. In cooperation with the Department of Public Information, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has distributed flyers and brochures on the World Conference at the regional expert seminars held in Warsaw, Bangkok, Addis Ababa and Santiago de Chile, as well as at the various regional preparatory meetings. A poster for the World Conference, designed by the renowned French artist Tomi Ungerer has been issued, 50,000 copies in English, 15,000 in French and 15,000 in Spanish. A revised information brochure on the World Conference was prepared by the Department of Public Information: 45,000 copies have been distributed in English, 10,300 in French and 11,400 in Spanish. The brochure has also been distributed to all United Nations information centres in electronic form. A press kit consisting of a World Conference folder, brochure, background articles and fact sheets was distributed during the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference (May-June 2001).

60. "Sacred Rights", a special publication compiled by the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual leaders in cooperation with OHCHR to commemorate the World Conference, was launched in Geneva by the High Commissioner on 15 June 2001. Publications on gender and youth are under preparation.

61. **Meetings and special events**. The High Commissioner has proclaimed a number of international meetings as satellite meetings to the World Conference, including the Bellagio consultation on the World Conference, organized by the International Human Rights Law Group in January 2000; the Conference on Discrimination and Tolerance organized by the Danish Centre for Human Rights in May 2000; the "Beyond Racism" Conference, organized by the Southern Education Foundation, Inc. in South Africa (May-June 2000); the Hannover Youth Forum, organized by Canada and South Africa, in August 2000; the Minority Rights Group's workshop on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, held in August 2000; and the Regional Meeting for indigenous representatives from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America organized by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in February 2001.

62. On 23 October 2000, a special event at United Nations Headquarters brought together Goodwill Ambassadors of various United Nations agencies and organizations. One of the seven Goodwill Ambassadors for the World Conference, Nobel prize winner for literature, Seamus Heaney, briefed his colleagues about the Conference.

63. Awareness for the World Conference and its aims was also raised on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March 2001) through several activities. A generic video message for the 21 March event was dispatched to United Nations information centres, media organizations and to other relevant destinations; a special edition of the Visionary Declaration with the signatures of world leaders was prepared and sent to the Department of Public Information for distribution to United Nations information centres worldwide, with a view to getting it published in local newspapers on or around 21 March 2001.

64. On 30 May 2001, a panel on "Discrimination and racial prejudice: the challenge at work" was hosted by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Juan Somavia, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva during the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference. This joint OHCHR/ILO event served as a curtain raiser for future special events planned to be held in Durban on the theme "Equality and diversity at the workplace".

65. On 1 June 2001, during the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference, a concert, entitled "Geneva United against Racism" and presenting recently appointed Goodwill Ambassador Natacha Atlas and the Massilia Sound System, was organized on the Plainpalais in Geneva. The High Commissioner welcomed the audience of 20,000.

66. **Working with the media**. Ongoing collaboration with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), Globo of Brazil, CNN and major print and electronic media organizations has been established. Upon the recommendation of OHCHR, the Department of Public Information has provided scholarships to Globo and SABC to participate in the ongoing World TV Forum in New York where, still with the collaboration of the Department of Public Information, activities related to the World Conference are being highlighted. On 7 December 2000, a videoconference hosted by international media and the Spanish-speaking

television networks, in which the High Commissioner participated, was held in Santiago de Chile.

67. Several interviews have been placed in various newspapers, such as *Le Figaro, Earth Times*, etc. The Executive Coordinator also undertook information activities for the World Conference during his last visit in South Africa, through interviews with representatives of various printed and electronic media.

68. The publication of a daily newspaper, in collaboration with the *Daily News* of South Africa (Durban), is being considered for the duration of the World Conference. OHCHR will also grant assistance to 15 journalists from the five regions of the world to travel to Durban.